

California State Archives
State Government Oral History Program

Oral History Interview

with

JOHN ROBERT CONNELLY

California State Legislature Staff Member
1960 1964 1967 1978 1979 1996

July 12 19 26 August 1 2001
Sacramento California

By Charles Wollenberg
Regional Oral History Office
University of California Berkeley

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None

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INTERVIEW HISTORY

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Interview Time and Place

July 12 2001
 Session of two and one half hours

July 19 2001
 Session of two and one half hours

July 26 2001
 Session of two and one half hours

August 1 2001
 Session of two and one half hours

All sessions took place in Sacramento California

Editing

Germaine LaBerge senior editor at the Regional Oral History Office edited for punctuation paragraphing and spelling verified proper names and compiled a table of contents
 Insertions by the editor are bracketed

Mr Connelly edited the transcript clarifying some passages and making minor corrections

Tapes and Interview Records

The original tape recordings of the interview are in The Bancroft Library University of California at Berkeley Records relating to the interview are at the Regional Oral History Office Master tapes are deposited in the California State Archives

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY

John Robert Connelly was born in New York City in 1934 and was raised in Philadelphia and Sacramento. He attended the University of Chicago and obtained his B.A. in history and government from California State University Sacramento in 1960. An avid sailor, he served in the counter intelligence corps of the U.S. Army.

Bob Connelly worked for the U.S. Forest Service, served as deputy director of the California State Department of Forestry, and deputy general manager of the East Bay Regional Parks District. He began his work with the California State Legislature in the 1960s in the Joint Legislative Budget Committee under A. Alan Post. Mr. Connelly worked as staff to the Assembly Natural Resources Committee and the Ways and Means Committee. He held the post of chief administrative officer of the California State Assembly under Speaker Willie Brown.

[Session 1 July 12 2001]

[Begin Tape 1 Side A]

WOLLENBERG one of the oral history of Bob Connelly We're in Sacramento and this is
Thursday July 12 Bob you're a Sacramento boy Maybe you could talk a
little bit about your growing up here in Sacramento about your family

CONNELLY My mother brought my older sister and me to Sacramento in 1945 She had
been working for the army in Philadelphia all during the Second World War
Family difficulties and the departure of my father encouraged her to get as far
away from the East Coast as she could and the family Sacramento was the
destination of choice Also some misinformed doctor in Philadelphia told her
that Sacramento was great for people with allergies I think he was a little
unclear on the concept [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY So we moved here in 1945 and lived in a hotel which is still present up on K
Street right it is between 9th and 10th It was called the Hotel Sequoia The
three of us were in a single room up there for oh ten days until we moved got
a house at a housing project in the south end of town there on Broadway

It was August it was just after the war was over The streets were full of

soldiers and sailors We would lean out the window on the third floor and see a slice of life of the sailors and soldiers fighting and the girls in the Treianon Dance Hall which was across the street over a theater which is gone now trolley cars running up and down the street That left an indelible impression It only lasted a mercifully short time

We moved into a housing project which is at 9th and Broadway and lived there for four or five years I went to a grammar school about six blocks south of the capitol William Land School The building was demolished and replaced with a more modern structure years later But the proximity to the capitol enabled us to when we weren't burdened with academic duties to sneak out of there and walk down here and play in the Capitol Building run the old elevators and drive the elderly and overweight state police crazy as they tried to chase us around the building That was so long ago that the annex wasn't built it was just the Capitol

WOLLENBERG Just the old building

CONNELLY The old unreinforced stone building Handsome in its time That was a period when I joined the Sea Scouts and met then Governor Earl Warren I had my picture taken in full uniform with the governor My first contact with politics'

Actually I lied about my age to join the Sea Scouts I think you had to be fourteen I was slightly under that but I was enamored with boats and the sea I was an asthmatic child which is why coming to Sacramento is so ironic And not being athletic in those days they didn't encourage asthmatic children to be athletic So I read a lot and someone gave me a whole box of *National Geographics* and in that was the voyages of Captain Irving Johnson and the

schooner *Yankee* He used to sail around the world every two or three years and *National Geographic* would do a twenty page story on it It was just *so* romantic They'd leave from New England they'd sail through the Panama Canal they'd go to French Polynesia around Cape Horn and then home it took eighteen months

It was so ironic that years later in the sixties when I was at the South Pacific myself on a sailboat I saw the schooner *Yankee* wrecked on a reef at Rarotonga I went out to her I had to wade out in waist deep water and I climbed up Someone who was trying to raise money in the states to refloat her had kept the brightwork up I'd never seen her before but I was so intimately familiar with pictures I could walk all through her I had to leave I was overcome It was so emotional to see this grand vessel which was the object of my vivid imagination and my romantic concept of the sea to be wrecked not by Captain Johnson but by the people he sold it to because they made a very stupid mistake and didn't pay attention to the weather

WOLLENBERG So you were raised in a single parent family?

CONNELLY Single mother single parent my mother who had been trained as a dancer She had danced in New York with Ruth St Dennis and Ted Shawn in Dennishawn & Company and she was a dancing teacher at their school Then in the spring and summertime they would go on the road and they'd do the old Orpheum circuit and dance They'd go as far west as Chicago and as far south as Alabama In the wintertime they would have students and she and my father married in the middle 1920s [Laughter]

My father with a sixth grade education went to France in 1917 with the

First Infantry Division and was a stretcher bearer. I remember him telling me

I didn't know him very well and I didn't spend much time with him especially when I reached my twenties. He died in 1960. But he was always of the mind that he probably was responsible for the death through shock of any number of wounded because the only medication they had was high strength iodine and he said they just used to pour it on the wounds and hope that they weren't doing any more harm than good. He was gassed twice and he was shot once and it was a pretty traumatic experience.

He then stayed on in Europe after the First World War and he had a facility for language. He became fluent in French, Flemish, German, and a little bit of Russian. He sold diamond abrasive industrial grinding wheels and that sort of thing. He stayed there until 1924 or 1925 and he was married there.

[Laughter] I didn't find that out until 1962 when his widow called me up and said she wanted his army papers for a pension of some sort. Knocked me on the floor. My mother was a Roman Catholic and her family is a Roman Catholic family [Laughter]. So that was not the subject of regular conversation. They had met and married in New York. My sister is five years older than I am and she was born as I was in New York City.

WOLLENBERG: You were born in the early thirties?

CONNELLY: I was born in '34. We moved to Philadelphia and were there during the Second World War. I remember these impressions because I was very much interested in geography and history and of course I learned all the battlefields and the routes and the nomenclature of the war and airplanes. You know I have had two or three really great passions in my life: boats and airplanes. [Laughter]

Unfortunately they are both extremely expensive hobbies [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG [Laughter] But they go back to your early childhood?

CONNELLY Oh yes when I wanted to be a fighter pilot I finally did get a ride one time in an F 51 Mustang fighter plane in a jump seat at an air show down in Madera California in the early eighties But for the most part I flew Cessnas and that's what I spent a lot of money on I've got 1 200 hours of flying down I have a commercial license and an instrument ticket

WOLLENBERG Do you still fly?

CONNELLY I don't I'm inactive because it becomes so costly to stay current I mean you could stay current under the federal regulations but for insurance purposes the insurance companies want you to be very current if you're renting aircraft and it's just too costly That and boats [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG When you moved when your family moved out here to Sacramento your father had split by then?

CONNELLY Yes my father bless his heart he had a major problem with alcoholism and he never could rise above it He was a great raconteur and he spoke as I said French and German so he could do the stories with all the dialects and all the language and intonations And he let that dictate his life He was a phenomenal man

I remember 1938 so I was four 1938 or 1939 We were living in a row house in Philadelphia those terrible cojoined houses on either side

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY And he was selling the *Encyclopedia Britannica* in the middle of the Depression hard to believe He was gone and he had been gone for several

days I remember my mother was cooking something and I was standing at her side I knew there was tension as children always do my sister was tense He came home it was dark must have been a winter night My mother went to the door and we all greeted him She said Well how did it go? He said Not well and she said Well I still have five dollars I remember her saying that and I was scared I didn't know what five dollars was [Laughter] but I didn't think it was much

WOLLENBERG Didn't sound that much

CONNELLY So we went back out and she was cooking something and stirring and there was steam in the kitchen I remember these impressions My father called to us from the front room where he was unpacking his cases and he had sold the living bejeezus out of the encyclopedias He had money stuffed behind every picture he had cash sticking out of the books from the library and it was a big joke for him We were momentarily among the wealthy But he couldn't sustain that and his alcoholism finally made the marriage untenable

My mother who was working as a clerical person for the army at the army signal depot in Philadelphia was working so hard and it just didn't work He went off to Chicago I lost track of him for fifteen years and I saw him briefly in the late fifties and he died in 1960 [Laughter] I'm not entirely sure that I don't have a half brother or sister someplace along the way I remember there were rumors of that

His brother my dear uncle when I was in my twenties went and got a shoe box and showed me the clippings from the Paris edition of the *New York Herald Tribune* of my father's divorce in Paris in 1924 or 1925 when it was

not divorces of Americans were not and it was a humdinger

[Laughter] I guess I mentioned that I never knew that he had been married earlier no one had ever mentioned that

WOLLENBERG What kind of work did your mother do for the state government?

CONNELLY No she worked for the federal government She worked for the army and she came to California Here is a woman who was born in 1895 so by 1945 she was fifty years old She had been a clerk for four years in the signal depot and this was the beginning of machine accounting

Mother had a will like a bar of iron and she was smart and she was single focused She became quite an authority she ended up as a GS 16 or a GS 18 and when she retired forced to retire at seventy She was sent by the army to the IBM schools at Endicott New York and she became in her own way an authority with a new medium It was all punch cards in those days and vacuum tubes I remember going out to the signal depot in the early fifties and seeing a room that was a huge refrigerated room because of the heat generated by the vacuum tubes It had about as much computing power as a small laptop today [Laughter] But it was very impressive topocata topocata topocata as the machines clattered on So she was remarkable

My sister Joan was visiting me this weekend and we were laughing about mother who died at ninety three Joan when she graduated from high school was enamored with a young man I think they were both eighteen and my sister announced that she was going to get married And my mother announced that she was *not* going to get married She took her to Los Angeles to UCLA where she had already made an application and saw that she was established in

a dormitory down there that was far enough away to dissolve any marriage plan

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY Joan then later graduated from the University of California at Berkeley and decided that she was going to work and Mother No you're not going to work [Laughter] So Joan got a Guggenheim and she went to Bryn Mawr and got a master's [Laughter] After that she was on her own and she ended up doing a Ph.D. at Bryn Mawr Then she ran the school that Bryn Mawr and Wesleyan and Radcliffe had been running for seventy five or 100 years in Madrid dealing with issues of Spanish history So she lived in Madrid for many years She worked for the foreign service for a while but that was not her forte and ended up teaching for thirty years at the University of Washington She published through Princeton Yale and the UC Berkeley Press so she did very well academically But she didn't marry her eighteen year old boyfriend

WOLLENBERG When you were kids did you ever talk about politics or was your mother political or your family?

CONNELLY No she was apolitical In the early fifties she told me she voted for [President Dwight D.] Eisenhower and I was so shocked because I was a Democrat by instinct not by training or urging from the parents I always kind of held that against her and she always knew it [Laughter] I used to tease her about it for years

No but my sister was very academically inclined and I think it was her influence that started me reading I read a lot of I read John Dos Passos

when I was fourteen I read *USA 1919* and *The Big Money* I think it was the first adult book I ever read and it just knocked me out with the story of the turn of the century poverty and the growth of the unions and the effects of the war

Then I read Hemingway and Sinclair Lewis and Faulkner I think these things left me with a sense of vast injustice Then I encountered Steinbeck maybe in the early fifties I think it was '55 he wrote *Travels with Charley*

Somehow I noticed I had overlooked him and I went back and I started to read I read of course *Grapes of Wrath* and *Tortilla Flat* and all of those things

There's just this sense of the ongoing effects of the bracero program and the terrible conditions under which people lived they weren't invisible Unlike Nazi Germany we did know what was going on [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG Yes yes

CONNELLY We could see it from the car So I think that's what led me to be a Democrat and to Democratic politics although I was never interested in running for office It was more of a policy interest I did a history and political science course of study when I finally graduated from college which was right here in Sacramento at Sacramento State College After matriculating in a number of other institutions very eclectic education experience I just gravitated down here I think I would have anyhow I would have come to the capitol in any event but I had some friends I had gone to school with one of whom was a state senator's administrative assistant and it was through him that I was urged to go and join the staff of the Joint Legislative Budget Committee which was a starting point for young graduates Today they wouldn't even look at somebody who didn't have a master's degree and they would prefer a Ph D

But in those days it was different

WOLLENBERG What was it like growing up in Sacramento in those years? It must have been a completely different town than it is now

CONNELLY As I said I lived in a housing project that is only three or four blocks five blocks from the river So naturally we the little boys gravitated towards the river It was a jungle wilderness down there There were lumber yards and then just the flood plane There were lots of people living in there they were the homeless people There were always homeless people here There were prostitutes who used to set up in tents in that area down at the foot of Broadway and we would sit there and talk to them [Laughter] in the daytime they sat on apple boxes in their skivvies and I think we were so little I think I was only twelve or thirteen I didn't really I didn't make the connection of what was going on We fished in the river and we had a sort of a Tom Sawyer Huck Finn kind of an experience There was a lot of skipping school and play down at the river

The fellows that I hung out with were also enamored with boats I mean there was this theme of big sailboats Then there was a lot of children's literature for fifteen and sixteen year olds that deal with the pearl lagoons and schooners going to French Polynesia This kind of stuff just besotted me

In those days the area between the Capitol Avenue Bridge the Tower Bridge and the I Street Bridge the Southern Pacific Bridge there was on the Yolo bank the marine ways on which barges had been built and steamboats had been built The brick buildings the shells of the brick buildings were still intact in those days You'd go over and wander through and you could see

iron work that had been discarded on the ground. They built the vessels sideways and slipped them into the river. 160, 180 foot barges and 200 foot steamboats were built over there. But it was all derelict by that time. The Yolo County Sheriff's Department would chase the hobos out and leave us alone. They weren't interested in truancy.

One day we were down there and a big 100 foot two masted schooner came up the river and tied up on the Yolo County side just downstream from the I Street Bridge. We went over and they let us come aboard. There was no hope after that.

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY I mean I was so overwhelmed with the beauty and the form and function. I think that is what has always drawn me to boats. That form and function is so integral with a boat. I think tugboats are among the most beautiful. I mean they are absolutely the ideal of form following function. They are one great big engine, a hull to support the engine and to pull things and push things. It always appealed to me.

But Sacramento was very small. I don't think there were 150,000 people here. There were only 7 million people in California when we came here.

WOLLENBERG I think that was about that in 1940, by '45 it was booming because of the war. It might have gone up to 10 million by then, but still it was pretty small compared to today.

CONNELLY Yes, it was pretty small.

WOLLENBERG Yes. And I guess Sacramento, being the state capital, the state government was the economy.

CONNELLY Well that and the railroads

WOLLENBERG And the railroads

CONNELLY were still very important and a trucking center And of course we had lots of packing plants especially tomatoes and fruit packing plants There wasn't much out of Sacramento If you went east on J Street to Fair Oaks Boulevard once you crossed the bridge out there at the American River you were in hop fields and there were quite extensive hop fields And that is the campus of the state university today I believe among the first or maybe the very first shopping mall was Town and Country which was at Fulton and Marconi It was sort of a joke because people would drive out there and they'd see this mall shopping mall and it was fields all around it and say Why the hell would anybody do a thing like that? How stupid! Boy I'm glad I didn't invest in that!

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY It was hot and there was no air conditioning in those days and I was still an asthmatic But in those days there wasn't much they could do for asthma So the climate here was not conducive to someone with asthma It was hot and it was full of pollens and all that kind of stuff

WOLLENBERG Were you a good student? Did school influence you?

CONNELLY No I am afraid that I had and perhaps still have a somewhat undisciplined mind I was not amenable to course work I would get bored and restless and I wouldn't show up In fact in the ninth grade which would have been what 47-48 I just didn't go to school for a semester My sister was away at college by then and my mother was working all day long and so I just didn't go to

school I just kept the window shades down and stayed in the house and read and listened to radio and played. The school called but only once. And I answered the phone. I could have been fifteen, fourteen or fifteen. I said, No [clearing throat] Robert is ill and I don't expect that we are going to be able to have him back in school this semester. And no one ever checked.

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY I had a paper route so I was rich. I delivered the old *Sacramento Union* down from 6th Street down to the river and from R Street near here the railroad tracks out to Broadway. I had 130 or 140 papers so I had something like \$30 or \$35 a month which was enough so that a couple of times a month and sometimes more often I'd go to San Francisco on the Greyhound bus in the morning. I had a regular route. I went to the old 7th Street terminal in San Francisco and then I walked down to the Emporium Department Store because they had a wonderful ship model collection in the toy department.

Then I walked down to the foot of Market Street and to the Ferry Building and I walked west and I got to Pier 45. At that time it was Fisherman's Wharf but there were ships loading and sometimes you could get around the gate and you could walk alongside and I could talk to the sailors. Then I would go up to the Maritime Museum which is still there at the foot of Van Ness and then go over to Eddy Street. Eddy Street was the headquarters of the Sailors Union of the Pacific. I'd sit around there until time for the bus and I would hear the stories of sailors who had been to sea. So I thought I was going to go to sea. I went in and the guy at the union the clerk said, Well you have got to be sixteen you have got to have something that says you are sixteen. So I guess I

didn't look like I was sixteen

So I went home. I had learned to type when I was very young. We had a portable at home and I typed up a letter of authorization and put my mother's signature on it and I went down the street. There was in the neighborhood an elderly alcoholic who happened to be a notary. I went to him and I said, you know, Mother is working and she can't get down but she has decided that the best thing for me to do is to go to sea and then I can help with the family expenses. What a b s artist!

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY And he was so sympathetic. He had been to sea before the Second World War. He said, Well, that is a terrible life for a young man and this kind of stuff. But he signed it and he put the notary stamp on it. I took that back to the Sailors Union of the Pacific and they put your name on a tag on the board. As the jobs came in, you moved the tag up and when you got the call, you went to sea. You had then joined the union and I had \$50 or something saved up for it. Well, the notary felt so bad about my going to sea that he contacted a federal agency and I think it was in the Department of Transportation and there was a program for apprentices, you know, or an intern or probably an apprentice of some sort. It was before we had the maritime academies or maybe it was part of that. And he got all the forms and he brought them over [Laughter] one Sunday morning to show them to my mother.

WOLLENBERG Uh oh

CONNELLY [Laughter] This was the first she learned about my intention to go away to sea and to solve the family's financial problems thereby. So that was scotched. I

know that it was one of the few times mother really got mad at me. She was a small woman. I don't think she weighed 105 pounds, but she was all steel. She called the Sailors Union of the Pacific, and they took my name off the board [Laughter] as a consequence.

WOLLENBERG: Did your mother know you had been going down to San Francisco?

CONNELLY: Oh, no. Well, that sort of came out a little bit. That and the fact that the Sunday school, the old Christian Science Sunday school, she had converted to Christian Science many years before, and I have never been a real strong adherent of organized religion. It was right up the street on Capitol Avenue, the First Church of Christ Scientist. I was allegedly going to Sunday school every Sunday morning at 9:30, and you know, to tell you the truth, it just didn't have much attraction for me. So I had the 50 cents I had for the collection plate, plus the two quarters for the bus fare both ways, and it added up to, you know, sort of a fun day.

WOLLENBERG: [Laughter]

CONNELLY: They weren't concerned about the collection plate; they were just worried that I was slipping away. [Laughter] That's another one of the disappointments I served my mother. Unfortunately, I am afraid that I gave her a very bad time. I discovered a group of friends, three or four of whom are still close friends of mine. Dave Pesonen comes from this period; we were twelve or thirteen, and Neal Jones, a wonderful guy who still lives here in Sacramento. We still see each other and go to lunch and laugh just like we did when we were twelve or fourteen years old. None of us have matured appreciably. I had a coterie of pals, who were in the Sea Scouts for the most part, and with whom we did

things like you know go into San Francisco and try to behave as though we were adults

Those are the late forties summers when I went to Catalina my first island to a Boy Scout camp that was out on Emerald Bay at the north end of Catalina Island We took a WWII crash boat out from Long Beach an army surplus sixty five footer out from Long Beach Harbor and spent two weeks in successive summers 48 and 49 or 49 and 50 We were just little boys At the end of the last night they played what was called a wide game And it was called a wide game because there were no rules It consisted of an old nail keg and a bunch of rocks tied up in handkerchiefs The camp and there were a couple hundred of us was divided into two teams At sundown one team took the nail keg and the other team took the rocks wrapped in handkerchiefs and the objective was to deposit the rocks in the nail keg and you could do it any way you wanted to So it was *wonderful* We thought we were commandoes we hurt ourselves we threw rocks at each other there were fistfights We stayed up all night and we behaved like crazies I don't know *what* they were thinking! We were in the water after dark we swam under the piers we just played all the war movies we had ever seen

That was the big attraction that and the girls camp down the road about two and a half miles But the girls camp authorities were much better organized [Laughter] and were fully aware of the potential for problems if the little boys from the Boy Scout camp were permitted to get amongst the young ladies It was not a Girl Scout camp it was a private camp I remember it was one of those times I that we had invaded the camp on a mission the girls

camp on a mission saying we wanted to rent some surfing equipment or some boating equipment But we were discouraged even though the hormones were rushing pretty hard at that point

WOLLENBERG When you got out of school you did something kids in the early fifties normally wouldn't travel to Pakistan

CONNELLY Yes that was actually the second time I did it I ran away from home when I was fifteen because I didn't go to school in the ninth grade I didn't know what to do in the fall so I took a train to the Middle West and stayed with my mother's family there for six months then came back at the beginning of the middle of the tenth grade So I was half a year behind my class so I didn't graduate in 1952 I used to tell people that they liked my work so much they kept me over for another half semester

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY So I graduated Now next year we are going to have our fiftieth reunion of the high school 1952 high school although I didn't graduate until January of '53 But in '53 my pal Neal and I decided to go to Europe to see the coronation of Elizabeth the Second We saved up our dollars we took a train to Philadelphia and my uncle got us a job delivering telephone directories So we had a big old rental truck and two California kids what were we seventeen in '53? Yes

[End of Tape 1 Side A]

[Begin Tape 1 Side B]

WOLLENBERG You were talking about your experience in Philadelphia

CONNELLY Unfortunately Neal got drafted and had to return to California and I had a

ticket on a Holland America student ship 600 kids I got on in New Jersey and went to Southampton There were 450 young women and 150 young men and it took a couple of weeks to get there on an old converted liberty ship Got to England and did in fact find my way to the front of Buckingham Palace and saw the coronation parade I saw Winston Churchill which was a thrill By that time I was reading history and reading the Second World War A lifelong fascination had developed early I saw the queen saw the household cavalry and all the rest of the stuff and I saw the whole panoply It was splendid Went down the coast highway to Dover a trip across the channel and found my way to Paris where a fellow I had known here in high school in Sacramento was going to an art academy He and I stayed together for a month or so in Paris near Montparnasse Then I went down to Switzerland and Italy and ran into some people I had met on the boat and rode along with them for a week or so Had almost no money I don't think I spent \$250 the whole time I was there Got back to Paris in late summer still packing a knapsack and my sister's portable typewriter which I then sold for \$50 and she has never forgiven me for that But I had a boat ticket the end of August early September for New York but I didn't have the wherewithal to cover myself until then Came back to California and actually went back to school

David Pesonen with whom I would work in the Department of Forestry many years later and with whom I'm a lifelong friend had worked for the forest service in the summer of '53 while I was in Europe So in the summer of '54 I had briefly entered junior college and that hadn't worked So I was working for the *San Francisco Chronicle* and living in Bakers Acre the

boarding house up on Baker Street in San Francisco I was working in the circulation department so I had a princely salary of \$250 a month and we used to play craps every night on the floor and lose your month's wages

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY and make it back the next night if you were lucky At the end of that I went away to the forest service worked up there with David for that summer 54 In the fall I went to the University of Chicago because a friend of mine in San Francisco had told me that was the thing to do I was there for a year I stayed in but I did not set any record The summer of 55 I went back to work in the forest service out here in California had a very long hard summer and I made a lot of overtime In the late fall probably October or so I left to go to Pakistan because a girlfriend that I had met at junior college was working for the foreign service in Karachi I went on a long expensive trip to Karachi via Europe a ship from Genoa down the Red Sea Fascinating I met a lot of English cops that were going out to Singapore and Hong Kong in those days We stopped at Aden in the port the bottom of the Red Sea there It looked like a Cecil B De Mille biblical movie set you know wandering through this part of the world wondering what the heck I was doing I got to Pakistan and the girlfriend was having an affair with her boss and was not interested in seeing the boy from Sacramento [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG 10 000 miles later [Laughter]

CONNELLY Yes so it was a bit of a bust But I always had been fortunate in meeting the right people I met some British engineers guys that were very very savvy had lived out in the East for a long time They got me to a black marketeer

who changed my few dollars in travelers checks and got me on a plane back to Spain where my sister was living and working in the foreign service. I got to Bern in Switzerland and discovered that I didn't have any money at all. I discovered that the plane for Madrid didn't leave until the next day so I repaired to the American consulate, announced that I was an American citizen in distress and I needed a few bucks to tide me over. When they finished laughing

Well, I said, My sister works for you guys over in Madrid. So the foreign service officer got on the phone and called her. He said, We have a young man here in my office who appears sort of rough and ready, having just gotten off an airplane from the Far East, and he's trying to borrow some money, and he claims he's your brother. And my sister [Laughter] I could hear her, she said, Well, he certainly sounds like my brother. [Laughter] So he lent me \$50 or whatever it was, and I got to Madrid. My sister then got me a job with a big American firm that was building airfields. My forest service experience had taught me how to start a bulldozer. I was not a bulldozer operator, but I could pose as one, and in that construction milieu in Spain in 1955, if you could start the engine, you were a bulldozer operator.

I moved a lot of dirt around rather unsuccessfully for a few months, so I was able to buy a ticket home. But that was a bust. Romances, I have never been very successful in affairs of the heart, except I have had two wonderful marriages, one of which sustains to this day, and I'm very fortunate.

WOLLENBERG: I guess like all of us of that age group, you had to serve in the armed forces at some point?

CONNELLY Yes the draft was off in 1955 So I volunteered because I wanted to go to the Army Language School here at Monterey It had then and I believe it still has a wonderful reputation I had some vision of myself as being in the foreign service I later took the foreign service examination and I didn't pass it But I went in and went down to Fort Jackson South Carolina which is where inductees from the East Coast went and was in an infantry training company with 210 other young men many of whom were from the deep South Since I was a typist as a first sergeant discovered when I borrowed the typewriter one day to send a letter home he and the company commander were standing in the doorway on a Sunday afternoon quite late and I realized suddenly that there was somebody behind me I turned and they were both looking at me The young lieutenant who was a cracker from Georgia comes up and says [in a Southern accent] Boy you can type! And I said Yes sir I stood up as I had been taught to do He says You are the company clerk [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG So much for the Monterey Language School

CONNELLY Well I got hijacked all right But I did all the record keeping and I saw the army scores I saw that these kids most of them were illiterate because this was volunteer The army sent them all to school they all had to be able to read to a third grade level Every afternoon they sent them over there

Then a slinky figure in a civilian suit came into see me one day and flashed his credentials from the counter intelligence corps He said We are looking we have been through the records and you seem to fit our profile We'd like for you to consider going into the counter intelligence corps and we're going to send you to the basic agents course at Fort Hollaburg in Baltimore I said

Well I want to go to the language school Hell the language school is right after you go to the basic agents course This was before James Bond but I thought I saw myself so I said 'Yeah!' So I went to school at Fort Hollaburg and I finished the army training the basic infantry training

For six months I did prisoner of war interrogation report writing then I took a six week course called D A M E Defense Against Methods of Entry We learned how to be a lock picker and how to blow up safes We blew up a hell of a lot of safes [Laughter] We had a lot of fun We used to play with nitroglycerin all the time which always surprised me as we would keep in cold in an ice pack and we'd pour it into these safes that they must have gotten from demolished grocery stores someplace and we'd pour paraffin in and use a razor blade to make a trough and pour nitroglycerin in that and use a Band Aid to put a blasting cap on it and you could very neatly and surgically blow a safe apart There's not much of a trick to do it I often wondered about some of my colleagues [Laughter] what they did for a living

But during the latter parts of that was when another slick officer suggested that in preparing for our duty assignments if it would be necessary for me to make a parachute jump would I be willing to do that? I thought well that seems pretty unlikely because I am going to wear civilian clothes and I am going to work at an embassy so I said 'Sure' [Laughter] And by that I volunteered for a prisoner of war interrogation unit with the 82nd Airborne Division and I went to Fort Bragg in North Carolina and made a lot of jumps out of airplanes and never saw the Army Language School [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG So then you finally came back

CONNELLY Came back to California I realized that California was where I needed to be I finally finished school here in Sacramento The last two years I mean I was really interested in American history and European history and I did well enough you know Dean's List and that kind of stuff at the end of it Of course I was by this time I was twenty five or twenty six years old I wasn't a kid anymore

WOLLENBERG This was the late fifties?

CONNELLY Yes Finally graduated I had been working for Hertz Rent A Car for three years while I was going to school so I was able to ski and behave myself in a thoroughly irresponsible fashion for that was really my youth

Then in 1960 I got married my first wife I met at school I went to work for the legislature down here the Joint Legislative Budget Committee and walked into a world where we were dealing with state finances with money with the disposition of tax revenues a whole different world But very interesting people many of whom were men all men at that time almost exclusively men at that time who had come out of the military in the Second World War retired army colonels and navy captains and marine corps So I was drawn to them because of their experiences and we used to spend hours talking [Laughter] And Alan Post himself is just I mean just a wonderful human being I hope you've met him He's calm he's incredibly intelligent and he is very deliberate He was just what this lunatic asylum needed They must have intuited that themselves because he was there from the late forties or early fifties

It metamorphised into the Joint Legislative Budget Committee

WOLLENBERG Yes Maybe we ought to back up and do two things first just tell a little bit how you actually got the job and then explain this whole status of the Joint Legislative Committee and Alan Post

CONNELLY Well I had recently graduated in 1960 And being married my wife was a social worker so we had an income but I needed to get a job So I went down and I took the test the normal test you take to get in the state service and I got a job immediately with the Department of Water Resources I reported for work there and it was one of these *giant* rooms with grey metal desks and grey metal people [Laughter] and eye shades and I looked at it and I thought Aww I just couldn't look down forty years of that So I went to John Moulos a friend who is still a friend of mine with whom I had gone to college and he was Senator Al Rodda's administrative assistant I went over and I said Johnny is there something like this that I could look at here in the capital? And it was much harder then because there were far fewer staff in the capital But he said Let's have you go down and talk to Gibb Lentz at the Joint Legislative Budget Committee So I did and they put me on Even though I didn't have the economics background that would have been desirable I did have political science and I could write at least and that was a big help

WOLLENBERG Maybe explain what the Joint Legislative Committee was and the role that [A] Alan Post was playing at that time

CONNELLY The state didn't get to its first billion dollar budget until 1953 but it had a huge rainy day fund coming out of the Second World War because there had been huge revenues associated with the economic balloon of the period 1940 to 1945 and they hadn't been able to spend it So they had huge amounts of

money ready for capital outlay This was the golden era of capital outlay And they had huge sums of money backed up in the general fund The legislature was part time they only met in a general session every other year and a budget session in the intervening year and they were paid pittance and they were completely controlled by the Third House

WOLLENBERG The lobbyists

CONNELLY The lobbyists And so someone instinctively knew that they needed some responsible long term guidance physical guidance in state policy from someone who was disinterested So they established the Joint Legislative Budget Committee Originally it was under the Joint Rules Committee It was established with the idea that this staff person would be appointed for a long period of time I don't think it was in the statutes that they would have a lifetime employment but it was long term And that they were to be *independent* and that they were to not involve themselves in the political fracas of the legislature but they were to remain aloof from that and to serve the legislature in the same way that the Department of Finance serves and continues to serve the governor

WOLLENBERG So even though it was called the joint budget committee in fact the core of it was the staff and in fact a permanent staff

CONNELLY Yes yes There was in fact and there still is a JLBC and there are members of both houses that sit on it but they don't have much influence because they have had a series of very strong leaders over there And they have had to be because there were lots of times when the legislature leaned on the JLBC But they found people from many walks of life many of them out of the military

initially and academia there were quite a few people from academia

They formed the staff the way the committees in the houses were formed up by subject matter natural resources capital outlay agriculture and these people stayed in those areas for years and became very familiar with it because prior to that and even for a while after the creation of the JLBC the Department of Finance would dominate the budget hearings The governor would propose his budget in January and the Department of Finance people were the only ones who were present to give advice The committees the fiscal committees of the two houses had a very peripheral role and they were excluded from the process because they didn't know very much about it It is an arcane process which to the outsider still remains very very complex although it is a very simple system and it is very easy to find your way through especially today

The Joint Legislative Budget Committee's immediate prior assignment was to publish in late January an analysis of the budget bill as it was introduced by the governor It is a compendium and it is keyed to all the items in the budget so that you can read it side by side and you can follow where the funding sources are where the distribution is where the capital outlay monies go and with great specificity far greater specificity than the governor was accustomed to giving to the legislature The staff would go into the field I mean we used to terrify agencies of the government because they were in the executive branch They were told to keep their mouths shut and Don't talk to those bastards from the JLBC and get us into a lot of trouble

So it was an intelligence mission and it was also a penetration mission I

had Transportation and Resources and Parks and Forestry Water and Transportation the police that kind of stuff And over a period of time you made contacts in those agencies but you could never never never burn your source never reveal your source in fact you'd obfuscate your source so that they wouldn't be able to work backwards and find out who told you

WOLLENBERG Who told you?

CONNELLY What they were doing It was that kind of information that kind of intelligence that you were able to use during the budget process in the spring of each year We actually sat with the committees the two Ways and Means and the Senate Finance in those days and we would advise them item by item And thereby the legislature took control of the agenda of the budget Now they only did it in a superficial way because the legislature still even though it has the resources to do it refuses to take on the policy implications of the budget bill on a year to year long term basis And if only the legislature could ever find it in their hearts and minds and brains to do a two or three year or five year budget planning program so that you had some concept of where you wanted to go They love to play with bits and pieces of money They always would argue for a half an hour on whether the Secretary of Water Resources needed a new typewriter and gloss over the million dollar item for the construction of a dam or a spillway or something because in those days it was hard for the legislators to get details and they had an excuse They weren't qualified for the most part They were used car dealers Los Angeles in those days was represented the entirety of Los Angeles County was represented in the senate by a used car dealer There were forty senators and

there are fifty eight counties and so we didn't even have one per county in those days

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY And that prevailed until 1966 of course with the passage of one man one vote So the JLBC was begun because someone realized that they needed to have expertise whether they paid any attention to it or not They often would ignore the recommendations and they still do to some extent But they do so at their peril today [Laughter] because now the recommendations are much more finely drawn and they are much more likely to be dead accurate and they are based on lots and lots of data gathering and experience with the same computer based data that the Department of Finance has My present wife was an analyst for the Department of Finance and we met at a hearing [Laughter] in the early eighties and we had some difficulties with each other early on

WOLLENBERG A certain amount of pillow talk?

CONNELLY Well this was before we were even seeing each other and when I developed an interest in her I used my office at the Senate Finance Committee where I was then serving to enlist the senators in helping me with getting a lunch date with her but that is another story

But the legislature realized they needed expertise By the late fifties of course they were beginning to see the water bond issue and they were realizing Oh wow this is washing literally pardon the pun this is washing over the top and they didn't know anything about it They didn't have any expertise they were playthings of the corporations which wanted to build water transmission facilities wanted the power from those facilities wanted the

irrigation water from those facilities wanted to change the San Joaquin Valley and the west side. A ridiculous situation where you're growing cotton in a bloody desert down there and have been for fifty years. And the question of agricultural of rapacious agricultural water use in California which never had a policy any policy guidance at all and had the added complication of having a federal system superimposed over the state system which prevails to this day [Laughter] and they still haven't sorted it out.

WOLLENBERG: Yes.

CONNELLY: I mean are people who have driven down I-5 aware that there are two parallel aqueducts and water being sold at *vastly* different prices to agriculture. So the legislature knew they needed some help.

WOLLENBERG: What was the role of A. Alan Post in this process?

CONNELLY: He is an artist, you know. He is an accomplished painter. And I think it was partially his intellect and partially the artist and partially his presence. All the leaders I've ever known had presence and Alan Post would come into a room and nobody ever slapped Alan Post on the back. No one called him Al. I mean you just didn't do that, you knew that that was inappropriate. He calmed people, he was known to be fair, he was known to be incorruptible. I don't think I have ever heard anybody say that he took a walk or caved in or bent to the will of anybody and I think that the Third House people very early on realized they weren't even going to get in to see him. Watching him handle the controversies of education in the early sixties, creating a master plan for education. I was in his office in the early part of that and in realizing that there were policy issues and the legislature could make a difference. You see for

many years there was a conventional wisdom in Sacramento was that they were there and they came together every year for some period of time but they couldn't do much damage because they were such clowns. And Artie Samish and others would keep them from doing irreparable harm to the economy so it didn't matter.

WOLLENBERG Did Alan Post actually set up the staff? Was he the person who created the institution?

CONNELLY He was there. I think it was 1948 as I recall and it gradually increased. By the time I joined the staff in 1960 I think there were about thirty of us which was a big staff. I mean it was the biggest staff in the capital.

WOLLENBERG So he had really created this institution.

CONNELLY It was this institution and he had found people who really knew the issues and he could trust them. Often he would say that he had clones and some of them did. They looked, walked, talked. Some of them even looked like Alan Post.

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY But they were unflappable. He would not get excited. He'd never get excited. He rarely talked to the press. His successors have been forced in recent years to do that but he didn't. He was very cautious. He stayed in the background and the legislators respected that. They knew that he wouldn't burn them, that he wouldn't embarrass them, he wouldn't call attention to the fact that they were doing something exceptionally and excessively stupid. He wouldn't do that. He would tell them that privately.

But we couldn't talk to them. The staff in the budget committee in 1960 could not call a member's office and go over and talk to them. You had to take

your principal with you or you had to tell your principal what your question was and your principal went over there. So they didn't want you to become chummy with the legislative staff. And there weren't very many staff over there and they certainly didn't want you playing cat and mouse with members. They didn't want you to embarrass the office, they didn't want you to commit to something that the office couldn't really support.

I was a junior staff analyst and junior staff analysts didn't make policy for the JLBC and that was made very clear. The capital was nearby in fact we were in what is today the restored capital. We were up on the third and fourth floors of the restored capital and we had these grand high ceiling wooden offices. We shared the fourth floor with the Department of Finance and with the press corps. In those days the legislature used to give offices, office space and parking to the press corps which was in those days quite large. Most of the newspapers in the state and the wire services had a presence here. But we were not encouraged to fraternize and in fact they did not want us to and we didn't.

WOLLENBERG: So by the time you got there in fact this structure was created.

CONNELLY: The book, the annual analysis of the budget bill, was an institution by 1960.

WOLLENBERG: What specifically were the areas again that you were sort of responsible for?

CONNELLY: I had most of the natural resources, Parks and Recreation, Water, Forestry, who else did I have? I had the Department of Transportation and I had the police forces, the California Highway Patrol and that kind of stuff. As a matter of fact, the first summer I worked for Alan Post, the summer of 1960, my wife and I toured almost every state park in California. We checked out a car and

took our sleeping bags and we went to almost every park in the state. In each case I would see an ailing septic system or a sewage system or a dilapidated parking lot or a beachfront headquarters that was falling apart. But I saw them all from the Mexican border to Silver Strand Beach State Park which is so often closed today by sewage flowing north out of Tijuana all the way up to the Redwoods and up to the Oregon border. I saw a lot of California parks in those days.

WOLLENBERG: Sounds like a good job.

CONNELLY: It was called the vacation budget in the office.

WOLLENBERG: [Laughter] Yes. So I guess that must have really been kind of an education into state government. This was a way to get into state government and understand it in a relatively short time.

CONNELLY: Oh yes. Oh yes. Well, it was so different than working in the agencies. The agencies in those days were much smaller. They were little tiny functionaries. Well, the whole business community worked differently than it does today. But agency folks were civil servants and we weren't. That was one of the principal differences. We were exempt employees, we were outside of civil services. I always liked that. I liked the idea of not being tied by civil service but also not having that mantle of security because you're more likely to not pull your punches if you recognize that what you were doing could cost you your job.

WOLLENBERG: I guess for most of your career you've been exempt.

CONNELLY: I was only briefly a civil servant. The agencies were boring, they were pedestrian, they stayed on message. They would not talk to anybody and it

became obvious very early on that the agencies had a life of their own and that the budget process added to this and sustained them in this life of their own. The legislature every year for the thirty years I was there produced 2 500 to 3 000 bills that the governor actually signed thousands more that fell by the wayside but 2 500 to 3 000 he signed. So there were that many new statutes on the books many of which passed through the fiscal committees because they had dollar implications and so should have found their way into subsequent budget bills. I mean there is a certain logic there that if you create an activity in state government you mandate it by law and you fund it in the bill that there is a supposition that it will be in subsequent years funded out of the budget. But in point of fact that rarely happened. The agencies come in with their budget which is built on a much different philosophy it's last year's plus 3 to 5 percent. And are they adhering to the codified instructions in existing law?

[End of Tape 1 Side B]

[Begin Tape 2 Side A]

WOLLENBERG Bob we have been talking about your experience in the Joint Legislative Committee working under A Alan Post and the kind of introduction and education to state government you got in that role. At some point though you actually became a staff person at the State Department of Public Health during that period.

CONNELLY Yes That was driven partly by my preoccupation with boats. My first wife and I had bought a small sailboat and we wanted to be in the Bay Area so I looked for an agency that was not headquartered in Sacramento. And that

happened to be either the courts the Supreme Court or the Department of Public Health So we moved to Berkeley and I took a job as a special projects officer and I was valuable to the agency because of my knowledge of state finance and federal finance

Mostly we went to the federal government for research money They used to affectionately call that job our resident bagman It got to be a joke No matter what the subject matter we could tap the till with a National Institutes of Health or there were huge amounts of money a lot more than there is today for new startup grants

I worked with a department and because of my role I wasn't tied to any particular activity so I learned something about drinking water which was a concern there about disease control I learned what the term epidemiologist meant Our equivalent of the Centers for Disease Control was run out of Berkeley and I learned about some of the problems that were extant Venereal disease was a big problem in those days and they actually had programs that chased people down and interviewed them and kept sequential event interviews and actually went and talked to people You know if that could have happened in the early in the middle late seventies maybe the AIDS epidemic wouldn't have gotten away from us But of course it was such a small scale thing compared to the AIDS epidemic

I learned something about the finance the politics of medical research in which there are plenty of politics and being proximate to the University of California We were at the north end of the campus So I had an introduction into the politics of the university the great august vast University of

California And later I analyzed their budget it was kind of ironic when I was back with the legislature

WOLLENBERG There must have been a different bureaucratic and work culture at an agency that was in Berkeley as opposed to Sacramento

CONNELLY Oh vastly different vastly different It was not like a Sacramento agency at all I shared an office with a man who had been in the Bataan Death March and retired out of the army early My boss was a very knowledgeable man knew all about how to get money out of the federal government but a *terrible* racist and a terrible sexist He told me once that as long as he was the division chief in the division of administrative services there would be no niggers and no women in this organization I mean he just was awful That kind of stuff went on a lot

WOLLENBERG This was the early sixties

CONNELLY The early sixties And then of course that was the time of the Free Speech Movement when Mario Mario

WOLLENBERG Savio

CONNELLY Savio was just starting up and the campus was rockin and rollin in those days And we weren't talking about the Vietnam War yet It was an exciting it was a vibrant time it was an exciting time to live in Berkeley And Berkeley looked more like it did in the thirties Now it doesn't now it looks like a Third World But the department was hidebound it could have done many things that it didn't want to do It was also there was a very large homosexual community in the hierarchy of the department That was my first experience with it It never made much difference to me but I was surprised at the extent

to which things were run by people of that persuasion. It was beginning to happen all over the Bay Area. I'm sure, and it probably happened here in Sacramento. I just wasn't aware of it. But I remember being very much aware of that, and the racism, and the fact that there were no women in the executive roles, or anything above the peon class. The women were always sitting at typewriters, that kind of thing. We had very few women investigators, there were a few, but not very many. It just was a time when men dominated and there was a very short career path for women, and early truncation of those careers.

WOLLENBERG: Yes, I guess that was probably true throughout the whole society.

CONNELLY: Oh, yes, it was.

WOLLENBERG: But you know, some people look back at that time, in terms of state government, as the kind of golden era, because that was the era of [Governor Edmund G. "Pat" Brown], it was the era of [Speaker of the Assembly] Jesse Unruh running the legislature. It was the era of the Master Plan for Higher Education, and the State Water Project, and civil rights legislation.

CONNELLY: It was an era of awakening. I think more in the legislature than it was in the agencies. They stayed asleep for a lot longer than that. But Unruh was a hood, he was a tough guy, he was street smart, a tough talking, dirty talking, cigar smoking, heavy drinking, smart man, who knew that the legislature was on the verge, and California was on the verge. He could see ahead to the time when we became what are we now, the fifth or so largest economy in the world. He *knew* this was happening. I think he sensed it, it came through his shoes. He knew that the legislature was metamorphosing into, and he had much to do with

it a full time legislature and fully staffed committees. He saw that that had to happen.

When I came to work in 1960 the legislator was making \$350 a month or something a minuscule amount of money. They were only there for a short time and many of them were really lawyers or used car dealers or insurance salesmen. Their heart and mind wasn't into it. And the Third House paid for everything they rented cars for them. I worked for a woman legislator whose children's daycare was taken care of she had accounts at department stores the grocery stores the dry cleaners her gas was paid for. The lobbyists used to come in and get the cars out of the basement over here and gas them or someone did on behalf of the lobbyists.

WOLLENBERG: You mean the legislators had all that all those things paid for them?

CONNELLY: All these things paid for them and it was sickening. They had no independence they often didn't know what was going on. There was much alcoholism well I'm not sure how much less alcohol there is now but there was a lot more of it then. And members were just simply playthings of the Third House and they used to hold committee meetings this was before public access laws were passed. I've been to Ways and Means and Senate Finance Committee meetings in the sixties which were just plain illegal. I mean the decisions were made outside of the public and at dinner parties where committee reports were drafted in local restaurants and the meals and everything else were paid for by the Third House.

WOLLENBERG: So in one sense in spite of the image of Unruh as a guy who was part of that process you're saying that he actually is changing that process.

CONNELLY Well he waded through the detritus of that time That is an argument against term limits the guy was there long enough for his intelligence and he had to be smart to begin with but he was there long enough to get the experience You don't intuitively know how to move policy It's like herding cats you can't make anybody do anything You can't make anybody do a damn thing You can only connive and cajole and push and press and sometimes whisper mean things to them but you can't make them you really can't you don't have any control over elected people That's the idea of course [Laughter] So to make them to get them to point them in a direction of changing to one man one vote A lot of the senators didn't think much of that idea Well neither did the members the legislators the other house because they all hoped to be senators some day

WOLLENBERG The U S Supreme Court had something to say about that!

CONNELLY Well the U S Supreme Court said No more of this stuff But they began to realize by the middle sixties that you know the economy was booming here in California it was a vibrant state and the old practices simply didn't serve anymore They were outdated they were superannuated they were obsolete and the people were incompetent and so you needed a new direction And Unruh was responsible he was largely responsible

WOLLENBERG He created a sense of a professional legislature

CONNELLY Yes You know he had his slob side and he made you know the great mistake of the lock down and this kind of stuff you know But he didn't have a manual to go by He was breaking new ground He didn't have anybody to look back to to say What the heck do I do next? because there had been

nothing like this there was nothing like this any place in the world The Congress was no guide the Congress was way behind us in making changes the Federal Congress was way behind us in making changes and modernizing their practices So he didn't have anything to pull off the shelf There was no academic who had done a monograph on the subject of creating a better staff response to legislative initiatives and policy directives

WOLLENBERG In a funny way even though they are completely different kind of people it sounds like A Alan Post and Jesse Unruh were running on parallel tracks

CONNELLY They were they were

WOLLENBERG Because they were both moving in this direction of creating a professional policy oriented staff

CONNELLY Of course Alan Post was there much earlier with his but he was a paradigm for the later creation And he was the staff to the legislature so I am not sure that there wasn't a little bit of reluctance among some of his colleagues and for all I know Alan himself to see the growth of personal staff Because later on when I was with [Speaker of the Assembly] Willie Brown and we *were* a powerful Ways and Means staff we used to have a very very active rivalry with the office of Alan Post very active rivalry

WOLLENBERG Because in Post's time for a while he had the only professional staff

CONNELLY Alan spoke and that was it

WOLLENBERG Now Jesse Unruh is beginning to build professional staff

CONNELLY That's right

WOLLENBERG Throughout the legislature

CONNELLY And things changed very rapidly then

WOLLENBERG Yes What about policy issues? You have that sense that back then big decisions were being made big decisions about higher education big decisions about water big decisions about civil rights legislation for example

CONNELLY Well the need for the big decisions became more and more apparent and the mechanism by which the decisions were made was lacking Committee chairmen in the late fifties and the early sixties were demagogues And it was pretty hard to get them to cooperate and you had to have cooperation if you are going to make changes The health committee was I am sure owned body and soul by health agencies and purveyors of everything from water systems to the pill pushers They were not interested in seeing a lot of interference with their new directions and their new found growth and wealth by a bunch of busy bodies incompetents at the legislature

The population was growing very rapidly By 1960 there were 18 million people in California These people were urban folks and they wanted parks and they wanted clean water and they wanted schools and they wanted better police forces and they were already moving into the interface areas with the forests And they wanted fire protection and they wanted management of their resources they wanted access to the beaches So all of this stuff is manifested in water policy and in toxic management policy and in beach access policy with the coastal zone the coastal commission And all these ideas came to fruition in the late sixties and the early seventies began to actually take concrete form And it happened because there was staff there not just staff but also better people there in the legislature There were a lot of smart people And Jesse Unruh didn't do it by himself He had [Assemblyman Robert]

Bobby Crown who was a smart man but a bit of a dilettante and was hard to focus I knew him fairly well

WOLLENBERG This was Robert Crown from Alameda?

CONNELLY Robert Crown from Alameda And you know he and [U S Representative Gary] Condit shared some problems And there was a lot of that in those days There were a lot of women around the capital who were pawns in a game and were willing to do that or felt that they had to do that a lot of them But there was George Miller who was in the senate And George Miller

WOLLENBERG From Contra Costa County

CONNELLY Senator George Miller [mimicking in a deep voice] he didn't need a microphone He was a tough son of a gun He had free reign to do anything he wanted to in education because the people that he responded to were the oil industry in Contra Costa County As long as he stayed out of their hair they didn't care what he did He was the chairman of Senate Finance in the early eighties

Unruh and Miller had a not so friendly rivalry for a long time and I knew one newspaper guy who on a slow news day would go over and quote something Unruh said to Miller so he could get a reaction out of him and then go ahead and tell Unruh what Miller had said about him and he would write a story about it There was a lot of that Ed Saltzman he did that all the time and he was a jerk and he made lots of problems It made good copy and it was fun and it gave everybody something to talk about but it wasn't very conducive to moving programs We moved haltingly forward in those days

But we were building we were finding a way to do stuff The 1966

changes in the full time legislature and the creation of staff it made a whole different place a whole different place And there were people who came on staff who stayed for a long time I wasn't the only one around there for a long time And I was there and gone and there and gone There are people like Dave Doerr in local government I think Dave wrote most of the government code and the civil code and the code of civil procedures I mean he really was there for a long time he was sort of an Alan Post type guy The lobbyists gave up talking to him because he wouldn't pay any attention to them He appeared to be asleep all the time But I think he wrote it in his head He knew where everything was in the code and he knew all the antecedents He knew all the history I mean every local government issue he had been through many times He could predict where the sensitive points would be and that is the kind of staff we had You had water guys in those days who had been there for years and years and years they knew *all* about the water wars they knew all about the water contracts they knew all about the federal program and the irrigation irregularities the dirty deals and the profligate use of California's resources that went on and on is still going on

WOLLENBERG Yes But you think going back to the Unruh reforms and restructuring that with this kind of staff expertise people can have careers in government?

CONNELLY Sure that's right

WOLLENBERG So that makes a big difference

CONNELLY They were guaranteed some longevity The reason that it worked is that the chairman became more beholden to the speaker and so the chairman couldn't hire and fire by himself he had to do it in conjunction with the speaker They

couldn't capriciously put their girlfriends and boyfriends and pals and family into these roles which is a common problem [Laughter] which occurs with some frequency I'm told in today's world So you had some continuity and that was the key

I mean Unruh said Put your trust and faith in me and I will raise the money He was the direct mentor of Willie Brown and Willie Brown's successors That was how it was done You focus the fund raising which everybody hates to do and if you have one guy who had raised the money that was the power plug that was the source of their power

WOLLENBERG I suppose in that sense Unruh was even taking power away from the lobbyists because he was raising the money rather than the individual legislators

CONNELLY Well and he became powerful because he was the go to guy I mean you couldn't go around him I mean you literally and figuratively he was a big son of a gun He got into every issue he was very smart and by the time I knew him in the early sixties you know he had been there and he had done all that you couldn't fool him Nobody could bamboozle a guy like Jesse Unruh He bamboozled himself later on I mean he kidded himself into thinking he could be governor of California a serious mistake

WOLLENBERG Bob in 1964 you sort of threw away your state career and went to sea How did that come about?

CONNELLY Well that was the rustle of the palms and whistling of the trade winds from my youthful reading I probably didn't have any choice I had to go to the Pacific My wife and I had bought a small sailboat Once we were in the Bay Area we met a couple of young men who had the same ideas and between the four of

us we bought a fifty foot wooden sailboat built in the late thirties. And in the spring of 1965 we left San Francisco for the South Pacific in an era when that wasn't as common as it is today. There were very few yachts in Pacific in those days and far fewer in Mexico. We went down to Mexico and we stayed for a number of months and then left in the middle of hurricane season and ran into a really terrifying storm off the coast of Puerto Vallarta off of Cabo San Lucas in Mexico and had the scare of our lives.

WOLLENBERG: Was it just you and your wife?

CONNELLY: No, the one fellow went with us, the other fellow backed out, so there were three of us onboard. We got far enough off the coast that we couldn't get back in any realistic time frame. And although we knew there was weather out there, we had been under the impression that it was north of us. It was the tail end of a tropical hurricane and those things have to be seen to be believed. We tied everything down and just rode it out like a big duck. As a matter of fact, we apparently were not in any great danger as long as the boat didn't break up, but it was a thoroughly frightening experience to turn on the lights on the spreaders when we were handling the sails and getting everything tied down and notice that the rain was moving horizontally rather than vertically.

We got down below, we were using oil lamps on that boat, it was so primitive and we got out *Bowditch's Ephemeris of American Practical Navigating The Ephemeris of Navigation*. We looked up tropical hurricanes and this very dry tome had a phrase under paragraph twenty three point seven or whatever it was and it said that: At the height of a hurricane, large vessels sustain structural damage and small vessels perish.

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY This was not what we wanted to hear. But a couple days of it, then it lightened up and we sailed. We were thirty four days at sea, navigating with the stars and the sun, long before geographic positioning systems. On the thirty second day, we found the western most island in the Tuomotu Archipelago, about 200 miles north of Tahiti. And at midnight or so, on a full moon, on the thirty fourth day, we saw Mount Orehina on Tahiti. A few hours later we saw one of the few lights in the South Pacific, at Point Venus, which was at a station set up by Captain Cook in 1776. God bless him. We entered Papeeti, stayed there for a while, visited most of the society groups of the Hulahini, Bora Bora.

We sailed into the reef pass at Bora Bora. I had wanted to do that since I was a child. We turned the engine off and we sailed through the reef pass which was fairly wide, it was a thrill.

WOLLENBERG Sort of living out your boyhood fantasies.

CONNELLY Oh, yes. And we anchored in the water where you could see the anchor in the white sand at seventy feet, and we swam over the side. We went on from there to the Cook Islands, and then down to New Zealand, and arrived there broke. [Laughs] My wife got a job at a candy factory, I got a job as a welder in a boiler works, building penstocks for a huge hydroelectric project. Peter, our partner, got a job as an apprentice longshoreman, and we worked for four or five months during the South Pacific typhoon season. Then my wife and I backpacked, we wandered all over the two islands, went to sheep stations. People would call their friends in, and put us up for a couple of days, that was really wonderful.

WOLLENBERG Sounds great

CONNELLY Then we decided to go home from there We had been out for about a year and we started back Peter left us and we picked up a couple of New Zealand boys who we met in Suva in the Fiji islands In fact I got them out of jail [Laughter] They'd been into a quarrel with the crew of a Japanese fishing boat There was still a lot of residual opposition and antagonism between Japanese and New Zealand and Australian people because the war wasn't that long over So I got them out of jail and we sailed back Michael Joseph Patrick McCormack was one of them the other one of them was Danny O'Brien

They were a couple of characters they were young kids I was in my early thirties they were ten years younger They were wonderful sailors and they were great crewmates and great companions Michael sailed with us all the way to San Francisco but the other fellow got off in Tahiti We stopped at Samoa and he got into trouble for drinking got arrested and I bailed him out We got to Tahiti and he had some difficulty with the local authorities and I bailed him out of jail and we sailed up to Honolulu [Laughter] I said You know once we're in the States you've got to be a little more careful Michael We called him Mikkell Pickle the Kiwi Wonder Mikkell Pickle He said Bob I've seen the error of my ways When he came aboard he was illiterate He was functionally illiterate And he read *Dr Zhivago* on the passage from Honolulu back to San Francisco

WOLLENBERG Wow!

CONNELLY We read all the time

WOLLENBERG No TV

CONNELLY No TV We got to Honolulu broke and so I got a job on a marine research vessel it was called the *Teritu* I was just chipping metal I wasn't aboard a month when I got Michael a job too and my wife my first wife got a job selling tours and renting cars for a big hotel We lived right on Waikiki Beach we lived in the Alawai marina About a month into being on the *Teritu* I was chipping paint one morning and the captain came down and asked me if I would like to be his first mate [Laughter] And I said Well I'd be glad to do that So I spent about eight nine months on the ship And I would have stayed I mean it was a great life Totally different than anything I had ever done before We were working under navy contracts and we did a lot of deep ocean bottom testing and thermocline analysis and testing over the side for depth and temperature and salinity and that kind of stuff It was a whole new experience

There were times when I behaved like a bucko mate out of the nineteenth century because there was a lot of drunkenness among that crew It was during the Vietnam War and the better more experienced seamen were all going to sea and making lots of money So we had lots of roughnecks and and I think I would have stayed with that I actually considered it but they wouldn't hire my wife and I didn't want her to be ashore all the time So we eventually I packed it in and we sailed our boat back to California and sold it and I returned to the legislature

WOLLENBERG Was that you know this was happening about '64 to '65?

CONNELLY '65

WOLLENBERG That's in the midst of the quote unquote sixties that's when people are

dropping out

CONNELLY That s right

WOLLENBERG this is when the antiwar movement was alive and well Were you in some way or another affected by all of this?

CONNELLY You know I really wasn t The Watts Riots took place when we were in Papeete in 65 and I was very much aware and I almost felt like I was missing something by being so far away from it because the South Pacific was then a good deal more tranquil and backwaters than it is today I was very much aware We used to listen to BBC on shortwave radio so we were aware of what was going on we certainly were aware of Vietnam My partner on the boat was more of a child of the sixties with recreational pharmaceuticals and that kind of stuff But I was always very strict about it and we had some quarrels about it because taking a vessel into a foreign port is a little different [Laughter] than being a tourist and you re liable to not only be thrown in jail you re liable to lose the boat and so I was very careful that none of that stuff stayed on board

And later on when we were by ourselves when Dorene my first wife and I were by ourselves and we had pick up crews and we had quite a few between New Zealand and Fiji and San Francisco I always I did body searches on some of them [Laughter] and I was just real sure that there was nothing on the boat It was a serious consideration But we didn t feel that we were practicing anything that was particularly counterculture I felt like I was exploring you know a long held dream [Laughter] I m never quite as sure of my wife s enthusiasm for long ocean passages and we did sail 18 000 miles At six miles

an hour that's [Laughter] a long time you know So I probably got more out of that than she did as later events validated

WOLLENBERG But this wasn't tuning in turning on and dropping out for you?

CONNELLY No not at all not at all I mean you know I had always done very badly at mathematics I was terrible in mathematics all my life I just had never been able to see the essential relevance of it And then in those days you had to take tables of tabulated azimuths and calculated altitudes out of a ponderous volume and working with an almanac and using first principles of mathematics spherical trigonometry you had to understand those basics and I had no problem with it at all I had a wonderful time I was a good navigator I was already a pilot by then I got my pilot's license in 1957 so I'd had some exposure in that kind of navigation But we were always learning things and I taught a great many people how to navigate Peter and I in Berkeley before we left had taken a course at the University of California a naval sciences course on celestial navigation During the course of the trans Pacific I must have taught twenty five or thirty people who astonishingly were in the middle of the Pacific Ocean and were unclear on how to find their way

WOLLENBERG Unclear as to where they were?

CONNELLY Where they were And you know the islands are not that big [Laughter]
There were people who got themselves into big trouble out there but it was really quite simple to avoid that I always enjoyed teaching people to navigate

[End of Tape 2 Side A]

[Begin Tape 2 Side B]

WOLLENBERG About you returning back to Sacramento after your Pacific odyssey was that something that you looked forward to coming back to Sacramento and getting back into state government or was it kind of a necessary evil?

CONNELLY Well I had been warned by many of my peers and colleagues that by leaving and abandoning my career and all the rest of it I was pretty much shooting myself in the foot and that there would be no future in it and that any future employers would always be concerned that I had demonstrated a flightiness and an immaturity et cetera et cetera So I wasn't sure that I could go back to work for the legislature I didn't want to go to work in government and I briefly flirted with going into private industry made some interviews for sales jobs that sort of thing but it just wasn't my bag I wasn't interested in it the profit motive was not something that interested me I did not want to get into that kind of competition So it was clear that I was going to go back to the legislature and David Pesonen who appears in this story several times was at that point working here in Sacramento for a woman legislator who had the Fish and Game Committee He was ready to go to law school So I came up and I applied with Pauline Davis a Democrat from the northern part of California and she hired me on as David left So for a year and a half or more we moved back to Sacramento and I was a committee consultant in the Natural Resources Committee

It was a very painful time She was the member Mrs Davis was an old line politician from the late forties and she had lived so long under the auspices of the Third House and the lobbyists that and she was a woman who would not be in the legislature today because she didn't have the requisite

skills and the experience. She had replaced her husband who died, who dropped dead of a heart attack between the primary and the general election in 1952 [Laughter] and had survived ever since by following the signals of the Third House. She made her bones, in the sense of the Mafia, during the water wars of the late fifties and the very early sixties. She was the swing vote, a northern California vote, that enabled the bond issue, the great water bond issue, to pass the legislature.

WOLLENBERG: The state water bond.

CONNELLY: For the state water bond, for the state water program. But she was an anachronism by the late sixties, and it was very difficult to be with her, because her policy sense was very dim, and her ethical orientation was very light.

And we were, by the late sixties, beginning to realize that resource conservation, water management, surface and groundwater management, endangered species acts, all of these things were important and there were concerns about them, and concerns about the effect of agricultural practices on the water and wildlife of this state, and changing patterns in people. People were beginning not to go hunting so much anymore, and so that impacted the Fish and Game Preservation Fund. The Fish and Game Preservation Fund, as you may know, is the only fund that is housed in the state's constitution, and had been there since the turn of the twentieth century.

WOLLENBERG: And that is the fund that is supposed to be promoting preservation?

CONNELLY: To pay, right. And it was done with the best of motives in that time. It was so that no one would ever be able to interfere with the true interests of California sportsmen, who would pay into this fund, and it would always be

there to ensure that there was game to shoot [Laughter] That was what they were really thinking of

WOLLENBERG So the money from the hunting and fishing licenses would go into the conservation funds

CONNELLY All went into the Fish and Game Preservation Fund Well California caught up with that and there were soon many many many necessary expenditures to fix problems in the wildlife area that were beyond the capacity of a diminishing Fish and Game Preservation Fund because there were fewer hunters and fishermen because people were building homes where they had shot deer before and the farm lands had replaced grazing areas and the Pacific flyway was diminishing in size because of agricultural activity So at that time you needed new enthusiastic thinking And the Fish and Game operations are funded from general fund sources now And Pauline Davis was not able to really see this

She was a product of the fifties and the early sixties In 1968 Bob Monagan and the Republicans for the first time in many many years took control of the assembly And she lost her chairmanship and I lost my job It was sort of a mixed blessing [Laughter] I had the briefest sigh of relief but I also needed to pay the rent So at that time fortunately I was able to connect with Senator Nick Petris a very sophisticated a very able legislator from Oakland

WOLLENBERG Before we get into Petris that period of the late sixties when you worked for Pauline Davis that is the period when a new environmentalism or ecological movement is coming to fore

CONNELLY Yes

WOLLENBERG And yet she is from a traditional rural constituency where I think natural resources had always been thought of as something that you use that you profit from

CONNELLY That you harvested Yes we always used to hear that term We were always going to harvest it in the sense that it was going to grow back in the spring And [Laughter] you know unfortunately if you shoot enough of the specie nothing happens in the spring It's like Rachel Carson says it gets real quiet Also there were so many factors impinging on wild land habitat that she that people of her generation simply couldn't understand the synergism of what was happening to the resource and what was happening as a consequence of this population explosion going on and changes in agriculture I mean agriculture was really getting huge in those days This was the heyday of the pesticide industry I mean those guys used to drive up (you know if your doctor's office gives you a handful of boxes of sample pills) but the pesticide guys used to hand out fifty gallon drums of pesticide Try this you'll like it And this stuff was all over the place

I was living in a farm at that period in Clarksburg about ten miles south of Sacramento We were living in a pump house that had been built in 1890 something and converted to a house sometime in the twenties It was a wonderful place in the middle of a farm But we regularly got dusted by the aircraft and the fields were being powdered and dusted constantly with it I mean I'm surprised that we didn't all die of some terrible disease I also watched a three field system of an old farm it always had one field fallow I

mean that farm had been there since 1870 something. All of a sudden, no fields were fallow, and they were not putting alfalfa in to put the nutrients back into the soil. They were ripping the ground, eventually within just four or five years, by 1970 they were ripping the earth six and eight feet with big hydraulic, diesel hydraulic tractors, and then introducing the nutrients, because the soil had been so exhausted in just those few years. And this was happening all over the state, rapacious tomato growth, and other specialty crops, there was a lot of money to be made in those days. The legislature was way behind the mark on this stuff.

WOLLENBERG: A committee like the Natural Resources Committee would almost be promoting that, rather than trying to regulate it.

CONNELLY: I mean, they thought that if they got behind the effort to sell duck tax stamps in California, which sustained some habitat in Canada for migratory birds, that they were somehow conservationists. And indeed they were conservationists, but in such a narrow sense. Duck stamps was the only thing they could focus on when these enormous questions of water usage, and agricultural usage, and pesticide usage, and farmland disappearing into shopping centers was occurring.

WOLLENBERG: I guess Jesse Unruh was still the speaker until Monagan took over.

CONNELLY: He was still the speaker.

WOLLENBERG: Was he at all, in any way, conscious of a new environmentalism?

CONNELLY: No, I don't think so. He was more concerned with the political process than he was with some of these bigger issues. And almost, I think I'm correct on this, I think almost all of these big movements came to the legislature after he was

there I'm not sure that they weren't superimposed. The legislature rarely generates new issues.

WOLLENBERG: Stuff comes to them from the outside.

CONNELLY: It comes to them, and the usual first response is erratic, and dangerous, and usually expensive, and almost invariably not very effective. It takes a while to isolate the central components of issues and begin to really understand what it is you have to do first before you can solve the whole problem. And that corresponded with the growth of staff. You see, the fact that I was staff to the Natural Resources Committee was a function of Jesse Unruh's efforts. There was just me; most committees only had one staff person, and maybe a secretary, one professional staff and one secretary. But that was a lot more than we had before, and we didn't have to wait for the Department of Finance to tell us, or the agencies to tell us. So we could make independent examinations of what the hell was going on around us in these areas. We knew that the Fish and Game would never tell you, but the Finance would tell you, is that license sales were dropping.

WOLLENBERG: Yes.

CONNELLY: And then we, "Hey, time out, danger signal, we're not going to have any money in that fund pretty soon." There was money from ammunition sales, and we thought that was a wonderful thing as well. [Laughter] You know, in a world where hunters are not hunting, to put your hopes and your resources [Laughter] funding from ammunition sales is not the most long-term policy program to win.

WOLLENBERG: I guess your experience with A. Alan Post and on the Joint Legislative

Committee must have really helped you as a staff member

CONNELLY Well yes For starters I knew how a bill works

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY And there were a great many people around then and I'm afraid there are a great number of people around now who don't know how a bill is written and more importantly they don't know how it moves and they don't know how to follow it And we were it was sort of an on the job technical training program informally at Alan Post's office But we knew the technical sides of how amendments work and what happened as a bill was amended which inadvertently or on purpose it obfuscates [Laughter] the origin and the activity in the bill If you're looking at the second and third amendment for example all the original stuff in italics and strikeout the additions and deletions have disappeared and the only thing you're looking at in the third or fourth or fifth amendment are the effects of that amendment So if you haven't got a set of codes handy

Nowadays of course they are on the computer you can pull them up right away but in those days you had to be able to go to the codes and then you had to know there was a pocket part and you had to figure out where they started so that you would know where they were going with the legislation And if you didn't have that kind of basic knowledge of the process you were totally bamboozled by the Third House and their attorneys who knew exactly how these things worked and knew how to lay in wait and put things into a conference committee and move stuff into a conference committee that had never been through either house

There were later changes made by the Rules Committee in both houses so that it became more difficult to insert stuff that had never been through a committee a policy committee or a fiscal committee But in the late sixties we were still finding our way We'd get smart and then they'd get a little smarter then we'd catch up and then they get a little smarter and that's what was going on But if I hadn't had the training and fiscal training *Nothing* happens nothing happens in the legislature that is of any significance that doesn't cost a lot of money And if you don't know if you get yourself into a place where you accept an amendment or you support a bill or you pass a bill out of a committee under the impression that you are solving a problem when you don't have the funding it's a form of self abuse it's really stupid to do that

Unfortunately I'd be willing to bet that a hell of a lot of that's going on now and there was a lot of it going on in the late sixties as people were learning that Uh oh hey wait a minute where is this in the Budget Act where is the money for this what is the source of it? Well it is a special fund Great how long is that special fund going to have these surpluses in it? What's the statutory direction of that special fund in the first place? Is this an appropriate expenditure from that special fund? What does the guiding legislation say the legislation that established that special fund? They didn't come out of a Cracker Jack box somebody wrote a bill on that that's where it came from

And you had to know that there was restrictive legislation around *every* funding source [Laughter] And if you didn't know that you could get

bamboozled. Oh, well, we'll take it out of the so and so fund. There either wasn't any money in it or it was not appropriate usage and so you'd just chase yourself up a tree. There was a lot of learning process and that was going on at that time.

WOLLENBERG: I guess when you became part of Senator Petris' staff for the first time you were actually working directly for a legislator.

CONNELLY: I was personal staff.

WOLLENBERG: Personal staff. So then you'd be involved in lots of different policies.

CONNELLY: Oh, yes. Much different. He was an urban senator, he was a very sophisticated guy, he was Greek. He was very interested in things that were going on in Greece, the Colonel's Revolution, so I actually had some exposure to those issues. He had been in the United States Army and had been in Greece, the Greek Civil War, following World War II. He was a Stanford graduate, Stanford Law, and he was a good Democrat and a good smart guy and a thinker. He wasn't afraid of anything. He had a rock-solid seat. There was just nothing that could have injured him ever and nothing ever did. He just retired a year or two ago.

But he also [Laughter] would roll the dice on it. I mentioned this newspaper reporter who used to play the Jesse Unruh-George Miller game well, he was from the *Oakland Tribune*. Ed Saltzman. Ed used to sit behind his desk in the senate chamber, was close enough so that he could talk to Petris. It is very boring out there a lot of the times, so they would chat back and forth. This was the time of air pollution and automobile pollution and pollution control and the very early days of the pollution control devices on automobiles.

Ed said to Nick one day You know if you really wanted to solve this thing you just ban the internal combustion engine And Nick came in to me he says Write a bill and ban the internal combustion engine I said Senator you ve got to be kidding

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY I mean you just can t He said Write a bill So we wrote a one line bill that said On and after January 1 of 19 a couple years hence it will be illegal to sell or possess or offer for sale (all the legal language) an internal combustion engine in California And we introduced it It was a slow week The press was all over the place They just What are you crazy? California lives on automobiles we spend billions on freeways we live on the sales on the gas taxes Are you insane? And Nick said No it s the right thing to do Nobody expected it to go any place [Laughter] of course

WOLLENBERG It stimulated a little discussion

CONNELLY And it was sent to the Health Committee in the Senate The Health Committee for Christ s sake on an air pollution bill It was a short committee Tony Bielsonson was on that committee I think he might have been the chair And Tony Bielsonson s a good guy

WOLLENBERG A Democrat from southern California

CONNELLY A Democrat later a congressman for many years from southern California and subsequent to this period he was the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee A good liberal a good liberal Democrat It was a short committee and he got the damn bill out at 11 00 at night on one of these long night sessions and it got to the floor It got out of the committee and the Third

House said Well OK fluke no problem And the Third House guys used to sit in the senate chambers they probably still do on the north side the two sets of seats that are down closest to the members so they can see the members you know give them this

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY Tug of the ear stuff Nick stood up the bill came up on the floor Again it was at night it was quite late We had mail from all over the world I mean this really got a life of its own and we heard [Laughter] from every screwball in the world with replacement or alternative energy talk about alternative energy we heard them all Including one guy who was going to get the Congress of the United States to repeal the first law of physics I said Why are you going to do that? [Laughter] He said Well because otherwise if I don't do that my invention won't work

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY He had a car that had four electric motors or three electric motors and one was a generator His theory was that the generator would run the other three motors and the other three motors would turn the wheel and would rejuvenate the generator so it was a perpetual motion machine [Laughter] So I said I don't think so But we were out at the state college having these letters translated We got them from China we got them from Russia

WOLLENBERG This must have been during the energy crisis of the seventies

CONNELLY No it was before that This was in '70 maybe '71 So we were on the senate floor with the bill and Nick stood up and he was a very very effective public speaker and he said You know a lot of people don't take this seriously but

these are the facts that we are poisoning ourselves we are poisoning the environment that we are on a course which cannot fail but to lead us to a disaster somewhere down the line with traffic and all It was the model of an attorney's good lawyer like argument He got finished and he sat down There was lots of opposition and they said This is frivolous and We shouldn't waste our time with this

There was an old guy from San Jose and I can't think of his name he's a Republican very conservative Republican guy He had been there for a long time He was an older man He stood up and he said Mr President I have known Nick Petris for many years and many times I have been seriously concerned that he is a member of the Communist Party I have opposed him on virtually every policy issue but this time he is right and I am voting for the bill [Laughter] And he brought about six other people with him and the damn thing passed! [Laughter] We passed the bill People were almost falling out of the balconies The lobbyists had never seen anything like that before never seen anything like that It passed it got out of the house and we moved it to the assembly and we were set in the Assembly Transportation Committee within a week or ten days

I called Ralph Nader and he agreed to come out to the thing We had everybody in the world who because I think this was just about the time his book hit *Unsafe at Any Speed*

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY We had every Greeny in the world It was an opportunity I mean everybody could make a statement Nobody expected the governor would sign the thing

[Laughter] [Ronald] Reagan was the governor you know he wasn't going to sign that. We had testimonies all afternoon. They started at 1:00 in the afternoon, ended at 6:00. The chairman, a Republican guy from southern California said, "We've got to stop and have something to eat. If we had taken the vote before the break, we would have gotten the bill, because we had the whole committee there. The press, the cameras were all there. But he was a smart guy, he knew that first of all they'd all go down to Frank's and have a couple of beers. And by 7:00 or 7:30 when we reconvened, the press had gone home, because they weren't interested in staying around. The big dinner had taken effect, and many members wouldn't come back. There wasn't a chance we couldn't get the bill out. We never got another hearing on it."

WOLLENBERG: That's a great story.

CONNELLY: But Nick took those kinds of risks. But later, you know, he was very active in producing farm labor legislation, and very active in producing pesticide control legislation. He was very active with the United Farm Workers. But his interest was not political. Yes, they are our buddies, and we have to, but it was an actual concern for farm workers' safety, plus what we were doing to the environment. He was a rarity because he was before his time. He had been an assemblyman in the house, and was a colleague and a confrere of Jesse Unruh and Bob Crown, and all these other guys. He stayed through a number of eras, he is a fascinating man.

WOLLENBERG: We should probably do an oral history of Nick Petris. [we have ed.]

CONNELLY: We should do an oral history of Nick Petris. He is a wonderful guy.

WOLLENBERG: That's a great story. Well, you know, this all, as you pointed out, was

happening during the Reagan years what '66 to '74?

CONNELLY 74

WOLLENBERG What was going on in Sacramento during those years?

CONNELLY Well the first four years of Reagan people everybody was in shock I mean they were thinking Jeez did we actually elect a cowboy movie actor as the a guy who has been making sounds like he was actually going to be a contender for the presidency of the United States? And people quickly became aware that it is dangerous to underestimate people like that and still is equally dangerous today to underestimate people coming from these different backgrounds Anybody with circumstances and money and a little luck can have profound effects in effect on politics It is terrifying it is chilling how quickly things can happen as we have seen in some recent years But he was sort of learning his trade in those days And if I am not mistaken I think it was Tony Bielsenson who carried the first abortion bill to legalize abortion And Reagan signed it

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY Reagan signed it I mean people were falling off chairs when that happened He also signed one of the biggest tax increases in California history minuscule by today's standards but it was a biggie in those days So you know he used to be a Democrat he started out his career as a Democrat and maybe some of these things didn't matter to his close associates so they happened I mean I don't think if he looked very far ahead he would have signed an abortion bill

WOLLENBERG Well also I think some of the landmark environmental legislation in California was signed during the Reagan years

CONNELLY Well and it was certainly the era when it was beginning We got

WOLLENBERG The Wild Rivers Act

CONNELLY The Wild and Scenic Rivers was '71 or '72 and the Endangered Species Act the Surface Water Contamination stuff much of that was signed in those days I think that he recognized partially that he was dealing with a California constituency and we had a much more active press corps in those days They were in the building and many of them were long termers That also gives you an advantage It is a two edged sword of course because they can become very experienced and can become very fixed in their own paper's policy But a lot of times the newspaper guys that had been around a long time had heard it all before too and they can smell the difference between you know a piece of real legislation that is going to do something that has some substance to it and something that is just froth and nonsense They were very vigorous in castigating people who did both either were so visionary it was ridiculous they used to say This guy doesn't want to win he just wants to come up here and blow his nose and yell and holler and carry on If he wants to win he would have a different author They were as knowledgeable about the process as staff were and the members were in some cases so they could tell It is like a guy like Dan Walters who has been here for 4 000 years and he knows all the shenanigans But not many of his colleagues do anymore because

WOLLENBERG They haven't been around that long

CONNELLY They haven't been around that long and their papers don't have the same interest and the public doesn't But the public was interested in these times I mean you had the Coastal Zone Commission you know that was a major

regional departure

WOLLENBERG Passed by initiative in '71 or '72?

CONNELLY Yes and I think well I've forgotten I think there was legislation following the creation of the Coastal Zone Commission And Fair Political Practices Act [Governor Edmund G. Jr.] Jerry Brown coming in running on that issue and changing things not completely and not wholly but nobody had done it before And California was well regarded by most of the other states and by the federal Congress I mean we used to get calls from staff in Washington What are you guys doing on this thing? What's happening with wild and scenic rivers? What are you doing with endangered species? What are you doing with coastal zone access? What are you doing with farm labor? And also the land use problems the farm land going under housing I don't think that happens very much anymore

But we were really breaking new trails in the snow here and we thought it was so fun to be part of this I mean even some of the most antediluvian minds realized that they were in the midst of a revolutionary period and that they couldn't come and talk to their constituents with a straight face and say Well we don't need to deal with water and critters and fish I mean we need to be talking about serious stuff about banking They knew that that wouldn't sell anymore and there was a groundswell Part of the Flower Power of the sixties this denegation of authority this rejection of Well they must know what they're doing they've been elected they're up there in Sacramento Nobody believed any of that anymore As a consequence many times members had to demonstrate [Laughter] that they at least had a grasp of the

essentials of some of these things

WOLLENBERG Were some other aspects of the sixties also affecting Sacramento? I think that was in '66 or '67 that the Black Panthers came up with their weapons

CONNELLY Oh yes the Black Panthers came up here

WOLLENBERG Was that having an effect on the day to day operations?

CONNELLY Well I'm sure it was but that was the stuff that just reinforced the neanderthals I was in the chambers the day that the Black Panthers arrived They had rifles slung on their shoulders there were three of them and they came into the chambers with their rifles [Laughter] I mean there is no question about it When they came into the door What was the Berkeley assemblyman who had such bad eyesight?

WOLLENBERG Don Mulford?

CONNELLY Don Don Mulford Don Mulford had *extremely* bad eyesight He had very thick Coke bottle glasses and used to carry a gun A lot of these guys used to carry guns And he [Laughter] was known to be armed People when the Black Panthers walked through the door nobody was worried about that They just stood around They didn't do anything they didn't shout and there were more cops around them the cops were following them around like pussycats But everybody [Laughter] was afraid that Don Mulford was going to start shooting! [Laughter] And his eyesight was so bad that was the real risk and danger involved So several people went over and talked to him you know and calmed him got close enough so that they could grab it if he pulled it Nothing absolutely nothing happened The Panthers were arrested for a Fish and Game violation outside on Capitol Avenue

WOLLENBERG Yes because I guess it wasn't illegal to walk in to a legislative session with a weapon

CONNELLY Yes it is now but it wasn't then You could have a gun and you could legally have firearms on the premises And they got picked up for having loaded guns in the car

WOLLENBERG Yes But was the whole atmosphere of the sixties affecting the legislature?

CONNELLY Sure

[End of Tape 2 Side B]

[Begin Tape 3 Side A]

WOLLENBERG We were talking about this period of the late sixties and seventies when Ronald Reagan was governor and the way in which the upheaval in the society was having an impact on Sacramento Was there a backlash that was strengthening Ronald Reagan's political standing?

CONNELLY Well sure because Ronald Reagan wasn't alone in his feelings about the student unrest on the campus the denegation of authority the calling the cops Pigs I mean a lot of people agreed with that It scared them

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY And a lot of people were frightened You know this was the time when communism was still regarded as an enormous threat and we were scared to death of Communists getting into government and the Communists doing this and that And we were afraid more that it wasn't even communism so much as we were afraid that somehow institutions which had been static for so long were going to be jeopardized and that my pension might be affected People had gut reactions to this and it scared them They didn't like long

haired kids. Unfortunately, the tendency of the kids to look as threatening and as disheveled as possible fed into Reagan's view that they were all troublemakers and that they weren't really students; they were just hangers-on on the campus. You know, it has always been true that there are a lot of people hanging around on the campus [Laughter]. It was true in the 1900s, for goodness sake.

WOLLENBERG: And within a few years the legislators would have long hair and look disheveled.

CONNELLY: And in a few years the legislators were wearing the kind of clothes that the kids were.

The war was beginning to heat up; we had had, by 1968, the Tet Offensive. We saw the papers, the Pentagon Papers, and we knew that we were involved that the United States, the good guys, the white Christian knights, the guys with the long banners, were doing dirty things. And then My Lai occurs in the late sixties, and we said, you know, American boys and girls, or boys at least, went into a village and shot people, and we have pictures of a child burned by napalm. We began to think, we doubted, we were afraid of what was going on; we were afraid of the consequences of looking too closely into our own souls. This made the conservatives up here even more conservative, and a hell of a lot of Democrats have always been pretty conservative. There have always been Southern Democrats in the California legislature. Now they're from southern California, but in the sense that they have the same long-term conservative views and predilection to supporting staid institutions. It scared them. Everything scared them.

It was a very unsettling time and Reagan was a spokesperson for those who were unsettled. He was one of them; he had a folksy way about him; he could shake his head and he could say, 'It's a pity that they are so misguided and if they would just embrace the values that made this country great, blah, blah, blah, and he could... he gave that same speech forever. The few times I ever saw him, I was in a meeting with him a couple of times in the conference room in the governor's office. He would come in and he'd have these security guys all over the place; this is a little later, this is in '74. He would have pancake makeup on all the time; he was always ready to do a photo op; you know. This present governor has no claim for having originated the instant photo op. Reagan did it a long time ago before the cameras were as good as they are today and can compensate for a failed complexion.

Then legislation that was happening scared people. I mean, Wild and Scenic Rivers. What the hell is a wild and scenic river? Well, someone came into that guy's office and said, 'Yes, that is a wild and scenic river, but it is also a river we might want to put a dam on pretty quick. Before you lock it away forever in a Wild and Scenic River Act, you ought to think about the fact that we need to put a dam... Now, it's not true; we've already dammed most of the dammable rivers and did a long time ago in California and hydroelectric power has lots and lots of drawbacks as you know. *The Cadillac Desert* was written in that period or shortly after that.

WOLLENBERG: Sometime in the eighties.

CONNELLY: A lot of people were beginning to realize that these solutions from the teens and the twenties and the thirties in the United States... the great combines do

you remember we used to see these films in school and there was always one shot of the whole line of combines

WOLLENBERG And another shot would be the big dam with the water spilling

CONNELLY We were always supposed to be awed by the majesty of this and the power

WOLLENBERG But to me Reagan is interesting because on the one hand he does represent that reaction yet he does sign the Wild Rivers Act he does sign the abortion bill It shows how the times were changing

CONNELLY Yes The times were changing and he knew that he was going to have constituencies on a national basis who would have some of the same views It was when the thing happened at Kent State though I think that people began to realize the danger in our society in overreacting I mean Huey Newton and the Black Panthers and that awful thing in the courthouse down there in Marin you know just sickened people and terrified them

But at that same time I had an intern when I worked for Nick Petris this is the last part of those times must have been 69 or early 70 This young woman came up she still is a staff person over here in this day She showed up as an intern from UC Santa Barbara we got to talking and I said You know Senator Petris is not a very conservative guy We had already had I think the automobile pollution bill She said Well I was in the riots in Santa Barbara I said What the hell happened? She said Well I was there when they burned the Bank of America building down I thought Oh you know I've got a bomb thrower! Actually she was returning from a ski trip [Laughter] and was walking through campus on her way back when she was arrested by the cops because she happened to be standing by the burning

building had nothing to do with it [Laughter]

Our kids scared us

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY We really were afraid of them Never trust anybody over thirty or anything then it was forty then it was fifty

WOLLENBERG Right [Laughter] All those people are now about sixty the people who said Never trust anybody over thirty

CONNELLY That's right We didn't have our feet under us we were off balance we were scared our national conscience was bothering us we knew now that things were not hunky chunky that there was a *lot* of work to do And that you wouldn't have grand actions you know there wouldn't be a signing of the Social Security Bill It would be incremental and it would be a lot of hard work and you would have to spend years learning the issues learning the elements of the issues to tailor legislation if legislation was appropriate We were beginning to realize that you couldn't solve all the problems by introducing a bill and the practice of introducing a bill with the intention of bamboozling people into thinking you had solved the problem by introducing a bill wasn't working anymore because there were too many people who were writing in the regular newspapers that you were not telling the truth and you knew you weren't telling the truth So they had to become more careful And I think we had some very good people who were very smart Lots of them were very conservative too All the good guys weren't Democrats by any stretch of the imagination

You knew you had to know more and you had to be smart you had to be

more patient. If you were going to bring an issue to the floor, it might take years. It might take three or four or five bills. And by the time you got the bill, the issue to the floor with a winning combination, you had a coalition behind you that was very different from the one you [Laughter] started with. And the bill was a lot different. Sometimes you amended yourself into perdition, and sometimes it actually worked. But no bill ever passed, no major stuff ever passed that wasn't a concord of all kinds of views and all kinds of. For example, the San Francisco Bay Conservation Act, which Nick Petris was very powerful with.

WOLLENBERG: The McAteer-Petris Act?

CONNELLY: That's right. It had exemptions for Emeryville. It had a major exemption for Emeryville. There were big holes in the thing because Santa Fe Railroad didn't want Richmond covered by it because Santa Fe was up there and Emeryville had plans to build those hotels up there. A bunch of guys went down with wooden stakes in their arms and drove them into the ground because that meant there had been engineering studies and field apparatus laid down and the project was exempt. So a couple of stakes thrown in with some tape enabled them to meet the requirement. They wouldn't even bother to do that anymore. [Laughs] but they did, they observed the niceties.

WOLLENBERG: I guess another thing that was happening in this period is the election of more African American and Latino and maybe even a newer generation of women legislators. What effect did that begin to have on the institution?

CONNELLY: There weren't many of them at first. Rose Vuich was the first woman senator. There were very few members of the assembly, very few women. In fact, there

were only two when I arrived Pauline was one and she had a colleague only two women I don't think there had ever been a woman in the senate There wasn't even a ladies room for them But the you know Willie came here in 64 or 63 I can't remember or 64

WOLLENBERG 64 Willie Brown

CONNELLY He and some of his colleagues there weren't very many blacks and there weren't very many Latinos Latinos didn't call themselves Latinos in those days They weren't a factor because there weren't enough of them yet and nobody believed they had a constituency Nobody believed that you know The conventional wisdom was if you had a black constituency you gerrymandered that so that it always produced a black member a black Democrat and that's all you had to know about the issue and nothing impinged on that and they didn't impinge on anything else That was beginning to change that was beginning to change as these terrible reapportionments began all through the seventies and eighties and nineties and still go on they're going to have another this year

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY But there were some sensibilities that had to be observed There were women present It wasn't exclusively a boys' club anymore and we began to see women in the capital Willie had women on his staff from the very beginning Ways and Means in 1971 And in professional roles they weren't clerical roles

WOLLENBERG So when you first started doing staff work in the early sixties there were no women professional staff?

CONNELLY No women at all none at all And no women at all in the analyst s office I don t think we began to see women in the analyst s office until the late sixties or the early seventies The woman who is the Legislative Analyst now [Elizabeth] Liz Hill a wonderful bright competent enormously capable woman was one of the very first ones And Alan Post knew it She matured and came through this process and many others like her too There was as there is now there was then a Fellows program Assembly Fellows program and I don t think it had any women until the later sixties early seventies

WOLLENBERG Explain just a little bit about the program

CONNELLY Well there were three Fellows programs one in the senate one in the assembly and one in the governor s office It was open to mostly graduate students from anyplace in the world We used to get applications from all over the world Mostly they were U S applicants although there were exceptions to that They came and spent a year in the capital and they were given a stipend and they worked as staff people The idea was to expose the general public to the intricacies of the capital I used to use it as a mine to get permanent staff I ve found a lot of staff people from the ten years I was chief administrator of the assembly I always looked for bright people in the Fellows program And they were already motivated so I didn t have to motivate them And after they had been through the Fellows program they knew what they were getting into so I didn t have to lie to them And by that time they were very experienced so you d be stupid not to hijack the best of them and keep them working there

WOLLENBERG And that program still goes on today?

CONNELLY That goes on today

WOLLENBERG That was in existence even as early as the sixties?

CONNELLY That goes back to the early fifties middle fifties I think back to Unruh and his guy Margolis

WOLLENBERG Larry Margolis?

CONNELLY Larry Margolis yes These seeds were planted that came to fruition later on And it couldn't have been laid out better because there was a process which produced people that we needed to have in place by the late sixties and the early seventies that knew something that knew something There were so many people around in those days who didn't know anything members who didn't know anything And the agencies For instance Department of Finance I mean you talk about Bank of America living in the 1700s the Department of Finance was very very old fashioned and very conservative and was not at all interested in innovating They were always present in the fiscal committees as the naysayers When anybody brought in legislation that was going to cost them Oh we can't afford that there's no money for that purpose And for a long time there wasn't anybody there to say You're full of baloney you don't know what you're talking about or Let's create a fund how about that? There's no money? Let's build one That was not their normal modus operandi It was ironic that my wife was an analyst for the Department of Finance And that's how we met [Laughter] in the capital but that was later on when they were hiring women and they were much more enlightened than they were in the sixties when I first began

WOLLENBERG But it sounds like a lot of different kinds of changes were going on in the sixties The institution was changing and a lot of this was a reflection of all

these changes going on in the society

CONNELLY Absolutely And the importance of the legislature was being mirrored by the growth of the state budget In 1960 I worked on my very first it was the 60 61 fiscal year the total budget was \$3.2 billion By 1970 I am pretty sure it was close to \$10 billion It began to increase at an exponential rate You know a billion here a billion there pretty soon adds up to real money and it really did and people began to realize what they were doing across the street here had the potential to have profound effects all over the place So the lobbyists were out beating the drums with their clients saying You d better stick with me I m going to lead you through this morass and these crazies left to their own devices will take you out of business You won t be able to afford to open your doors You ll have to pay a salary and wages and benefits and you ll be restricted and restrained and you won t be able to be doing what you re doing People got scared So it was a self fulfilling prophecy and there was an enormous frenzy Still is And to a certain extent there always was but it was on a smaller scale And the legislature wasn t taken very seriously until sometime in the fifties

WOLLENBERG Part of the effect of the Reagan victory was that the Republicans for a time took over both houses of the legislature? I know they took over the assembly

CONNELLY No they just took over the assembly and they only lasted two years
[Laughter]

WOLLENBERG Two years

CONNELLY And the Democrats came back big time and then Jerry Brown won the election in 74

WOLLENBERG 74 But even before that Jesse Unruh had decided to run for governor

CONNELLY When the Republicans took the assembly away in 1968 Jess Unruh's options were rather limited and he was from Los Angeles so he decided to run for the mayor no he ran for governor first

WOLLENBERG For governor yes

CONNELLY That was awful

WOLLENBERG He ran against Reagan

CONNELLY Yes and lost Then he ran for mayor and that was unsuccessful too Then he figured out that what he really wanted to be when he grew up was the state treasurer

WOLLENBERG The state treasurer

CONNELLY And that was a winner It was a mark and an example of his great capacity that he took a nothing office like the state treasurer and made it one of the principal constitutional offices in California and a force and a factor to be contended with He reverberated through Wall Street and he knew he reverberated through Wall Street

WOLLENBERG Was that because of the power of the office or was this because of the intelligence and political clout of Jesse Unruh?

CONNELLY Well he was a lineal descendant of Kaiser you know Kaiser Aluminum Kaiser Shipbuilding Kaiser's motto was Find the need and fill it And Unruh and later Willie Brown said Find a void and fill it And that's what Unruh did When he came to the treasurer's office the treasurer used to just sit there and twiddle his thumb I mean sharpen his pencil that was a day's work Unruh got onto every board and commission he inserted himself and as soon

as he got a seat on any kind of an activity he quickly usurped the power because he was smarter he was faster on his feet he was tougher He was a great chess player he was miles ahead of everybody else He would set them up for pratfalls and then he would triumph

Pretty soon he was the go to guy in California You wanted to do *anything* in California you had to go see Jesse Unruh He was very powerful when his elements overtook him and he passed away That was his skill he wasn't afraid to do anything and he saw how incompetent and how incomplete and how lazy most of the human race is So whenever there was an opportunity to do so he would simply move in and fill the vacuum People would turn around suddenly and find that he had them surrounded [Laughter] You know while they were still facing the wrong way And that was Unruh's technique

He wasn't the smartest human being in the world but he was a lot smarter than most of his colleagues and he was very energetic People who do well in politics certainly two that I knew Unruh and Willie Brown are very very hard workers I mean neither of those guys thought anything of working fourteen to sixteen hours a day I mean they were working when they were down there at Frank Fat's They were working when they were in a meeting in the conference room They were working constantly That was the story of their success they had more stamina than most people

WOLLENBERG I guess that meant that their staff people

CONNELLY Their staff people stayed up all night too [Laughter] I have spent more nights in that building across the street there than I care to remember I did I spent a lot of nights there

WOLLENBERG Of course when Jesse Unruh left and the Democrats came back into power in the assembly Bob Moretti

CONNELLY Bob Moretti came in

WOLLENBERG Succeeded Unruh as speaker

CONNELLY Bob Moretti I was working for Pauline Davis still Was I ? No I guess I was working for Willie it was '71 Moretti came in as speaker and he appointed Willie to the chairmanship of Ways and Means and Willie immediately opened up the staff program and began to bring people in So the first time I really knew Moretti was when he became speaker And I was appalled I mean he was a nice fellow and all that but he was a tough talking guy who just didn't seem to be the caliber to be the speaker to follow Unruh He coasted for a long time on Unruh You know this crude hand off attempt that they did it just that didn't work And I don't think he was the guy to go head to head with Reagan Willie used to do most of that in the budget you know The Big Five meetings they talk about were going on then too Willie was the one who went down and batted out these budget issues and that kind of stuff with the governor

I don't think Moretti left much of an impact to tell you the truth I certainly don't have the same feeling of his involvement and his reach that I did for Unruh I was in a much more junior position and wouldn't have had much contact with Unruh directly I was in a different position moving up the ranks when Moretti was the speaker [Laughter] I always thought he was a little bit shallow a little bit lightweight [Laughter] Then he thought he was going to be governor too [Laughter] A lot of delusions in this business

WOLLENBERG Well you know I think we've come to the point where you go on to the Ways
and Means Committee and I think rather than try to start that now we probably
ought to leave that for the next session

CONNELLY Sure sure

[End of Tape 3 Side A]

[End of Session]

[Session 2 July 19 2001]

[Begin Tape 4 Side A]

WOLLENBERG Thursday July 19 in Sacramento This is the second interview session with
Bob Connelly

Bob last time we were talking about the changes that were going on in the
sixties here in Sacramento and the way the legislature was responding to the
social changes of the society as a whole I think one of those changes that we
mentioned last time briefly was the fact that a lot of new young women
Latino and African American legislators were showing up Certainly in
retrospect the most prominent of those was Willie Brown who I guess was
elected in '64 and started serving in 1965

You were out of Sacramento at that time but you came back in 1967
When was your first interaction with Willie Brown?

CONNELLY Well I came back in '67 to work for Pauline Davis in the Fish and Game
Committee I think it later became the Natural Resources Committee I was
aware of Brown and his Nehru jackets and this was the period when he and
John Burton and others sent the famous telegram concerning the illegality of
the Vietnam War Actually they sent a telegram to Paris to an international

body of some sort and earned the enmity of everyone around here including Jesse Unruh who didn't think it was funny. But he was obviously a comer, he didn't fit in, he was not accepted by the old hands, most of whom had been here for ten or fifteen years. It was quite common for people to stay here for a long period of time in those days. They were almost all white males and they resented Willie's brashness and his effervescence and his irreverence. He was never one to bow to tradition. He probably offended many of the assembly people and I know for certain that he offended lots of the senators. Because the assembly was all male and I don't think Rose Vuich came into the senate until the early seventies '74 perhaps.

WOLLENBERG: Rose

CONNELLY: Yes. She later suffered from Alzheimer's disease and was still here long after she should have been. It was awful.

But Willie was obviously the man of the hour, a comer, and Moretti was looking for those kind of people when the house came back under Democratic control in 1970. So when things were set up and he opened his speakership with the departure of Bob Monagan and the beginning of a long period of Democratic control of the assembly, Moretti looked to Willie and others for leadership and Willie was rewarded with the chairmanship of the Ways and Means Committee.

WOLLENBERG: Even before that, there was this interim period when John Miller was the Democratic leader for a few months.

CONNELLY: Yes, John Miller.

WOLLENBERG: Another young African American.

CONNELLY Yes from Oakland Miller was a very strange bird I mean I later learned that he is quite a highly educated man but he was out of place here and he resented Willie Well he suffered from that later when he tried to run for speaker in the middle of the seventies I do not remember much about Miller as a presence He was not a presence in the House It was after Moretti took over and Willie assembled the staff at Ways and Means The first time that Ways and Means had ever had more than one person on the staff as a matter of fact

WOLLENBERG Well maybe just to give people a sense why was it such an important thing for him to get chair of Ways and Means?

CONNELLY Well Ways and Means then and to a lesser extent today was the only one fiscal committee And in legislation if a bill or any action any legislative action is going to have any significance it is going to have a money component No bill that does anything of any significance is missing that component It has to have general fund money or special fund money or bond money it has to have access to cash and lots of it in order for it to be significant So every bill that goes through the house goes to a policy committee for the subject matter Fish and Game Agriculture Transportation Judiciary And if it is a significant bill and therefore it has a financial component then it must go through Ways and Means So Ways and Means was the choke point It was the control point

WOLLENBERG So it had to actually be passed by Ways and Means to be passed on to the floor

CONNELLY It had to be Before you got to the floor you went through Ways and Means So you had dual referral on all fiscal bills and fiscal bills all require a two thirds vote so it is a much more difficult vote to get and much more

Moretti recognized in Willie that he was a competent man he was a strong man and that he would be able to revitalize and reconstitute its staff and committee structure I think there were twenty two or twenty three members of the committee with a Democratic preponderance of course Moretti knew that Brown would be able to control legislation Now in these days control legislation means something different than it meant in those days I mean obviously there were policy issues and there were political issues that meant whether the bill went up or down But Willie came into that committee with a very strong sense of mission a sense of purpose and when he assembled the staff he got Mockler Johnny Mockler and Steven Thompson and Clarence I can't think of Clarence's last name

We had an intern Elizabeth Kirsten who I believe is still with the senate and running the Senate Office of Research She was [Laughter] a lovely young girl a young woman We moved into quarters on the third floor of the old Capitol before it was restored these wonderful old rooms full of history and Ida Charleston was Willie's secretary Ida had been with him since '65 She was a very motherly woman very calm a nurturing calming kind of a person very much needed Jackie whose last name I can't remember at the moment was the committee's secretary She was a bit of a wild card she was very competent and later was a city council clerk here in Sacramento

But we said to Willie What's the process? I mean how do we have access to you? How often will we sit down? Do you want to meet with us weekly do you want to meet Ways and Means every week on Tuesday mornings? Or how? He said I don't want to see you guys I don't want to hear from you

He said I want you to do in your area what needs to be done I want to know what is going on in the legislature I want to see your bill analyses and I want to see them the day before I don't want you coming in here the morning of the session But I want you to handle your area and I'll tell you if you're overstepping your bounds Well that's pretty heavy stuff

WOLLENBERG [Laughter] What was Phil Isenberg's role?

CONNELLY Phil was the chief of staff

WOLLENBERG Aha

CONNELLY I swear I remember him rocking back on his heels at that too because you know Steve Thompson was and is a crazy man and Mockler is not the most reticent policy person in education and you know we were all pretty strong personalities

WOLLENBERG Had Isenberg been with Brown even before that?

CONNELLY I'm not sure that he had been in his office They knew each other because they went to law school together

WOLLENBERG Ah

CONNELLY And Phil and I went to college together So I mean it was a very ingrown sort of a group of people

WOLLENBERG Isenberg is from Sacramento?

CONNELLY He is from Sacramento We went to school he was doing I think his master's degree out at the state college when I was just finishing my bachelor in the late fifties

WOLLENBERG I think he had been involved a lot in politics even by then

CONNELLY Oh yes Young Democrats oh yes he was much more involved in the pure

political end of things. A very savvy guy and a really smart guy too. Phil does not get excited and he usually informs himself so he has an enormous advantage over people in debate because it is not characteristic of the legislature to be informed on facts. It is usually the case that there are strong opinions, powerfully held positions usually based on something less than factual information. Phil always had his facts that is why he had such a successful career here later as a member.

WOLLENBERG: He was also mayor of Sacramento.

CONNELLY: He was mayor of Sacramento and if you can stand being mayor of a crazy town like Sacramento with all the old families and all the baloney that went on here. And Sacramento was going through a metamorphosis too. This whole place was going through a metamorphosis. It was growing up, it was coming into its early maturity, its early adulthood, maybe. Maybe it was. It was adult life at least. So Phil was a calming influence. And Willie, he just he wanted to know what was going on.

WOLLENBERG: Did Willie recruit you directly or was it done through Isenberg?

CONNELLY: Actually, it was done through Isenberg. Isenberg put the staff together. Jackie DeFord was her name. And [Laughter] Jackie had a dirtier mouth than any of us. That used to make poor Ida cringe when she let fly. Ida, the last I heard of her, was with the tour guides over here. She had retired and was doing that as a docent.

But we had very little direct contact with the man. Many of us wanted to see if we could do an informal thing, have lunch with him. He said, "I don't want to have lunch with you guys." He said, "You know what we're doing."

here and we went to work right on the budget because the Ways and Means Committee was the budget committee. There was a budget committee, discreet and separate, but it was all done by the Ways and Means staff. So he said, you know, Do it. Well, Steve Thompson once held a press conference. He actually called the press and he held a press conference. The reporter said, Well, you're Steve Thompson, you're not Willie Brown, and he said, Well, call him up if you don't believe me. So they called him up and he was out at his law office because it was a Friday morning and they said, You guys held a press conference here this morning, and he said the following about some issue in welfare or some social policy issue, and Willie said, Well, if my guy said it, that's what I believe.

WOLLENBERG Did he know about the press conference before it happened?

CONNELLY No, he *didn't* know about it beforehand.

WOLLENBERG Wow.

CONNELLY And I'm not sure he cared. I mean, because he said, I picked you guys because you think the way I do. But, you know, very few politicians, almost no politician would have the *raw nerve* and certainty and personal security to do that. I mean, that's unheard of in politics today, to let someone else speak for you? I mean, you can't even write a letter without getting three signatures sign off on the draft before you get a letter out.

When we went into the agency, I had Transportation, Natural Resources, Fish and Game, Water.

WOLLENBERG So each staff member would take a certain portion of the budget?

CONNELLY We were set up the way the analyst's office is set up, and the way the

committees are set up although there were fewer of us than there were standing committees. There were twenty five committees.

WOLLENBERG Right. But each of you would have an area that you would concentrate on.

CONNELLY So we would go out and make our arrangements. This was the era of Ronald Reagan that was a Republican administration. It was very common. It extends to the present that governor's offices don't want legislative staff talking to their staff at any level and they certainly don't want them talking to deputy directors and directors and division chiefs and that sort of thing. So we would go and make our contacts.

Many of us had already had contacts because we had been working out of the area either with the analyst's office or the Joint Legislative Budget Committee or with other prior committee work. Education or Social Welfare this kind of. So we knew a lot of people in the agencies. We established the same kind of a system that a successful journalist does. We had contacts and there was a spoken not an unspoken [Laughter] but a spoken rule. Don't you ever use my name and don't burn me! Don't ever attribute so that we didn't get anybody in trouble. And after a while we established those contacts. I don't think a staff person in the administration ever got burned and we had good timely information. Because you can't work on legislation. I mean you can't work on the budget unless you have these kind of insights and this kind of an opportunity to go behind the facade of budget construction and budget assertions and find out what they're really doing. Because the budget process is was and always will be an arcane convoluted secretive process which serves a lot of ends and a lot of purposes but they're not always [Laughter]

very apparent. And often as not they aren't in line with the governor's policy either. [Laughter] The governor has the same problem [Laughter] with the agencies.

WOLLENBERG: The agencies are

CONNELLY: They don't know what the hell they're doing or who's doing what. That's why you have these terrible surprises—that's why chiefs of staff like Gray Davis then to Jerry Brown was adamant about it. And Reagan's staff was the same. They didn't want anybody talking to these folks in the agencies because we would find out that what they were really doing was capital outlay projects or policy initiatives or some new direction that they were taking that had nothing to do with legislative directive. It wasn't in the statutes; it was because someone had a favorite program or a favorite project. And they didn't do things. You also found that there were lots of voids—many, many voids in the budget. It took a while. I mean, we couldn't do it right away. An agency, an entity as big as California's government—and today the budget is \$102 billion [Laughter]—it's a big, slow-moving dragon. You can tweak it, but moving it off top dead center, moving it an inch to the left or right, is almost superhuman and an improbable task. The first person governors always appoint is their director of finance, and that poor [Laughter] beknighted person goes in and tries to do business, and it's like Richard Plantagenet trying to beat Saladin in the deserts in the third Crusade. You simply cannot move this great, immovable object. You can't even find it.

WOLLENBERG: So I guess the budget process would be that the governor writes up the first draft.

CONNELLY Right

WOLLENBERG And that comes from the agencies

CONNELLY That s right

WOLLENBERG And then it goes through his Department of Finance

CONNELLY That s correct

WOLLENBERG Then the legislative analyst takes a crack at it and now you re saying that with Willie Brown the Ways and Means staff was taking a crack at it

CONNELLY He created subcommittees I think four initially and now I think six or seven subcommittees of the Ways and Means Committee And they were designed to be subject matter subcommittees The objective was to build a reservoir of expertise and experience so that you were at least arguing on the same plane with the bureaucrats who had been there for fifteen or twenty years

And they were always contemptuous In Sacramento you have a natural rivalry between the bureaucratic body of civil service folks running the store and the legislature They always regard the legislature always have as a bunch of Johnny come lately do gooders interferers bumbler fools knaves villains There was always a lot of antipathy between the two Politically there was often the case with Brown and Reagan there was a political gulf between them a major one although there were some surprises along those lines too So the first year we knew it was bad but we didn t know how bad it was until we had been doing it for one budget cycle I mean the governor s budget is prepared beginning in August of any given year and by September or October the budgets are wrapped the agency budgets are pretty much fixed Then the Department of Finance massages it and they don t produce the governor s

budget which is a discreet document until January 1 that's when you are bound to do it. So anybody who works for Finance or the analyst's office always has their Thanksgiving and their Christmas holidays screwed up because that is when they are doing all the work. The budget proposal the governor's budget is given to the legislature in January by constitution by law. Then a member in each house introduces a budget bill and it is the governor's budget reduced to the bare outline of it and assigned the budget tracking numbers and the dollars are all plugged in. But it doesn't have the narrative and the text. The governor's budget is a book about the size of the L.A. phone directory two or three of them. And the budget bill is maybe a 175-200 page bill. There is one in the assembly and there is one in the senate. The day they are introduced they are identical. But then things begin to change.

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY And as the spring goes on sometime in the late January early February the legislative analyst produces a book called *The Analysis of the Budget Bill*. They've been working with the agencies since back in August or September and they've seen galleys and there's some cooperation. But there's a natural rivalry and competition between the Joint Legislative Budget Committee and the Department of Finance because they obviously have different objectives they work for different people different purposes.

WOLLENBERG I can see where a governor and the Department of Finance would probably resent the fact that the Ways and Means Committee is now creating a staff. But what about the budget analysts?

CONNELLY Well we used to get under their hide occasionally

WOLLENBERG Yes because you are competing with them

CONNELLY Sure Well there was a time when I first came to the legislature in the early sixties when the committees and subcommittees of the budget met in the spring of the year that the Department of Finance representatives very often had some substantial amount of control over the agenda And the analyst's office sat there and took potshots at them By 1971 when we were committee staff and we were principal staff to the subcommittee chairs the legislative analyst was on our side but they sat in front of us at the table and on the opposite table was the Department of Finance Once Willie's staff began to do independent analysis of the Budget Act we sort of bumped up against the Legislative Analyst's Office

By that time the Leg Analyst's Office was an old well established somewhat ponderous organization Alan Post wonderful warm intelligent experienced man very cautious he had lived in this milieu for many years The first thing he had to do to do the right thing is that he had to be there And he wasn't going to be there if he antagonized either the senate or the assembly leadership So he had to walk this fine very careful line so that he was in position to advise that he was regarded as being truthful and accurate and timely and that he was apolitical

Willie's staff [Laughter] had no such constraints on them We would often beat them in getting a bill analysis

WOLLENBERG So you're trying to deal with the budget and normal bills at the same time?

CONNELLY Sure For the first six months of the year from January to June you must get

the budget in shape to amend it and finally concur it in by both houses. But you have a flood of legislation moving in at the same time more towards the end than towards the early part of the year. We would often be able to produce an analysis, a good quality analysis too, if I do say so myself, of a bill within a matter of hours because we'd go call our contacts and we'd find out whose ox was being gored and who was the swagman in this one and who was making out. The agencies often would help us because it wasn't budget related, now it was policy related, so they'd tell us what insurance agency or what transportation company or what highway construction firm was behind this because they often knew. So we would put that into our analyses.

WOLLENBERG: When you say the agencies, that means your sources?

CONNELLY: Our sources in the administration, the executive branch of government. So many times they would gleefully join us in exposing the scallywags who were manipulating this legislation and who had authored it or who were opposed to it. And they would tell us why. It is very hard to know. I mean, there just isn't enough time, considering the volume of legislation, there isn't enough time to explore every single act of skullduggery. [Laughter] I mean, because there is such a huge volume of it. And it's not all skullduggery, but it all has a reason. Nobody introduces legislation to entertain themselves, there's always a reason for it. And it was finding the reason. Then sometimes you had to look and find the *real* reason, because often there was an ostensible reason and that was usually covered in the press release that the member offered or the agency

Many times they were agency bills, the agency comes and asks a legislator to carry the legislation. So you would have this great piety and high minded

press release and then you would go find the person in the agency and they'd tell you what was really going on. And we would tell Willie that and Willie would then announce to the world. It used to annoy the agencies well the agencies to a lesser extent because we always covered them we never burned anybody. And the analyst's office would I mean they were so ponderous it would take them a week to get an analysis of a bill out because everybody had to sign off on the drafts and all that kind of stuff. So we were faster than they were. They used to say Well they're a bunch of popinjays they're not accurate you can't trust anything they say but actually that wasn't true. It was not our intention to supplant the analyst's office because they had enormous resources you'd be stupid to do that. You couldn't possibly have the volume of experience and memory that they had. And they were very valuable sources of information too although they [Laughter] were encouraged not to talk to us. But we would be quick. Then early in the week we would wrap up all these analyses and Phil would go through them.

WOLLENBERG Phil Isenberg

CONNELLY Phil Isenberg would say You're a little vague here you know. Get me some more detail on this. But I think Ways and Means was Wednesday not Tuesday. By Tuesday afternoon we had a shoe box it was a tradition we had a great big old shoe box and all the analyses went into the shoe box. We would give them to Brown late in the afternoon on Tuesday and he'd drive back to San Francisco and he'd read them. Apparently he'd stay up all night reading the damn things because you could tell he'd read them. And very early on we discovered that you didn't want to put everything into the written analysis.

because in those days they weren't publishing them as they are now. Now they are on the

WOLLENBERG On the web

CONNELLY E-mail, they're on the web right away. And so we would say things that were perhaps a little bit scurrilous and actionable in some cases. So we would put those with a little addendum, there was a little slip that was at the bottom of the thing. So that was Willie's, that was Willie's notes. But you had to be careful because Willie would sometimes be entertained by them, so he'd read the notes out while everyone who was in the system knew who wrote that note because of the subject matter. So you had to be a little bit circumspect about writing too much down. But if you knew something good and something juicy, you put it in, and he was discreet about that.

WOLLENBERG I guess all of you were probably in your thirties then?

CONNELLY Oh, yes, early thirties for the most part.

WOLLENBERG And you were given this freedom.

CONNELLY Just absolute freedom, yes. Little Liz Kirsten, I think, was she was in her early twenties and she was an intern. And she took our budget and ran it the first year. I mean, she was extraordinary, she was a *very* bright, very competent woman.

WOLLENBERG Did she stay on then as a staff person afterwards?

CONNELLY She stayed on as a staffer and she made her career in the legislature and as I say, she is now in the Senate Office of Research.

WOLLENBERG Maybe we could just talk about a couple of the other staff members. John Mockler, for example. His field was education.

CONNELLY Education Johnny Mockler who is presently the executive officer for the State Board of Education was briefly this year a cabinet member for education for Governor Davis [Laughter] Johnny knows a lot about education He knows how it works he knows about the money I mean education policy is financial policy Money How it's distributed who is eligible for it how much are they eligible for how are programs financed from what source how is the money to be spent how is the money to be accounted for Johnny began doing that in the early sixties so by the time he came to Ways and Means as a staffer for education I mean he really was experienced See because there may be ten people in California who really understand education appropriations I mean it is just this arcane Merlin the Magician wrote the damn thing in the first place

WOLLENBERG [Laughter] And you're talking about over half the state budget

CONNELLY Well yes And it's an important part of the state budget

Johnny was very well grounded He is sometimes given to intemperate statements and he sometimes does not suffer fools gladly This was also a characteristic of Steve Thompson who was much more of a wild man He used to *really* make me nervous sometimes He stole some letterhead from a very prominent Republican senator of the period in the early seventies and wrote a press release on that and distributed it around the building purporting to represent this senator's views that he now had seen the light and he was fully in favor of gun control And the guy had a rifle rack in the back of his car He was just rabid

And he also had a guy on the staff who was a sheriff's deputy from Los

Angeles who used to carry a gun And that guy came *looking* for Steve [Laughter] and Steve had to stay home for a couple of days because he was *really* sore about that Willie was amused he was embarrassed because it made problems You know it was that kind of stuff that doesn't really help It's one of those things that seems like a wonderful idea at the time very funny but you know it hurt your credibility And if you can become the object of derision you've given away an awfully important part of your value There was an awful lot of opportunity The opposition is always watching for you to do something silly and then they can point out who is incompetent foolish immature and childlike And that reflects on the boss Willie was not amused when that kind of stuff went down And he didn't mind telling you If you got a tongue lashing from Willie Brown you know you'd been in there at an Olympic level and you didn't want that to happen any more often than necessary

WOLLENBERG But Steve Thompson continued on as a staff?

CONNELLY Oh yes he was good at what he did and he was very knowledgeable about medical and social welfare problems and we were dealing with that We endlessly reformed welfare and it never seemed to get any better [Laughter] but we continued to reform it

Elizabeth became very expert in her area she was in general government She later did a very fine study on the Department of Consumer Affairs [Laughter] which turned out to be a department of protection for a number of entities contractors and other professional people it was the old Business and Professional Department In fact I still think it was Business and Professions

in those days. It was a legislatively designed and constructed device to protect the interests of various entities who had contact with the public. It was much later that any consumer affairs or consumerism entered into it. And she found that you know their system for handling complaints consisted of having a very large wastebasket convenient to whoever was opening the mail and this kind of thing. And there was no record of any rectifying activity taking place. She did a first class job on that and Willie loved it. We did the job on the *Queen Mary* in Long Beach at about the same time.

[End of Tape 4 Side A]

[Begin Tape 4 Side B]

WOLLENBERG About the *Queen Mary*

CONNELLY Oh yes. Well the *Queen Mary* was a Cunard steamship that was aging and had reached a point where even Cunard in good conscience couldn't keep it afloat on the high seas so they sold it to the City of Long Beach. Long Beach was and is a recipient of Tideland Oil revenues. Tideland Oil revenues have been available to under a very complicated formula to coastal communities ever since the Tideland Oil Grants were written. In 1964 the Tideland Oil Act set up this formula and it set up a consortium of Mobile Shell Standard a bunch of big companies. And they took the oil out and they extracted the oil and then they paid us a royalty. And the royalties were 85 percent or 87 percent but when you looked at the contract [Laughter] and you looked closely you realize it was 85 percent of the net. And their idea of what was a business expense and what was the gross and what was the net was pretty astonishing. However there was so much money that Long Beach had by this

time had gold plated everything in the downtown area. They could build municipal buildings with it. They were restricted somewhat. But one of the things they could do was to build a maritime museum.

So Long Beach decided that nothing would do but they would have to have a maritime museum and nothing would be better than to have the *SS Queen Mary*. So Long Beach bought it and Jesse Unruh and no more than two dozen other people flew to England and came around to Long Beach around Cape Horn because the damn thing is too big to go through the Panama Canal. And they were treated you know to the Cunard first class there are twenty guys on a ship designed for. Well during the Second World War there would be 20 000 troops on it.

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY They came into Long Beach and they were going to build the maritime museum. They had Jacques Cousteau who I've always regarded as one of the great frauds in the world. Bank of America and IBM and the Diners Club were all involved in building this wonderful maritime museum and hotel and blah blah blah blah. Well the Diners Club as I understood it was at that point was a laundering operation for the Mafia. The Diners Club [Laughter] was the prime contractor in this thing. The city fathers having read their California history and they knew all about Huntington and Stanford and Hopkins and company about building railroads by creating companies and selling goods and services to yourself so they did the same thing. They created this wonderful entity and they swore and averred and raised their hands said they were going to build this first class maritime museum it was going to cost

\$6 7 million and it was going to be the deal of the century as this grand traditional ship the *Cunard S S Queen Mary* blah blah blah blah It ended up costing \$56 million IBM and Bank of America pulled out very shortly after they realized how incompetent and smelly the operation was And Jacques Cousteau pulled out of it after the money disappeared But not before he cut the center of the ship out [Laughter] in order to build this huge atrium

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY And fortunately some young engineer whose duty it was once a week to go down and put a theodolite on the pier and measure contact points along the side of the ship to see that it was staying afloat found it was sinking I mean it wasn't sinking but it was sagging in the middle So they managed to weld in some supports and they opened the *Queen Mary* Of course it has been a disaster it's a junkyard it has never reached its promise Long Beach finally beat up Pacific Southwest Airlines to open a hotel on it in return for landing rights in Long Beach And even that didn't solve it I mean it was built in 1934 The beds were too short for modern people [Laughter] There was nothing was right about it I mean I loved it as a sailor I had a wonderful time But as a tourist attraction and a maritime museum It never became a maritime museum

WOLLENBERG But as early as the early seventies you guys were already studying the project

CONNELLY We did a report on it and we got the auditor general in We didn't change anything The idea was to look at expenditures from the Tideland revenues It got a couple of days press and the *Los Angeles Times* loved it but I don't think we changed anything And I'm sure equally silly things are still going on with

it with the Tideland revenues if they're still where they were

Willie he was the author of the road show. He took the Ways and Means subcommittees and sent them all over the state. And the members hated it because it was you know a pain in the neck to drive to northern Marin County and this kind of stuff or San Jose or San Diego. But for the first time ever local newspapers and people came in and they actually saw what a Ways and Means hearing what a budget hearing is all about. Again we didn't break any new ground although I understand they're doing it again. Willie took a lot of grief from it. They said it was just an expensive waste of time. But I think anything that shines a little sunlight on this process is a good thing.

WOLLENBERG: You were technically you were staff of the committee but in fact you were working for Willie Brown.

CONNELLY: Well yes actually we worked for the Rules Committee and all staff works for the Rules Committee over here. Later on [Laughter] when I was the chief administrative officer for the assembly I insisted on that and I made lots of efforts to keep committee staff under some control about how much they got paid and how much time off they took and all that kind of stuff. But at that point the central structure was a little weaker than it is today.

WOLLENBERG: Was there any distinction made between his personal staff and you or was it pretty much just all one group?

CONNELLY: Well it was all one big family it was a big group. I mean he had a big district office in San Francisco and he had an office in Sacramento. Mary Burns was a woman who came up to Sacramento she was on his personal staff she was later the director of the Golden Gate Park and the zoo. She and Willie had a

falling out finally because she wouldn't give him the birds that stand on one leg? What are the damn

WOLLENBERG Flamingos

CONNELLY Flamingos! He wanted them for one of his parties down there and she wouldn't give them to him she said it wasn't good for the birds and he got mad at her So when he became mayor he forced her out But Mary was there and quite a few of the people from San Francisco who Colorful very colorful people from San Francisco who showed up for years at the fund raisers and all the rest of This was also an era where we were recruited and we were crudely politicized We were gleefully politicized by Brown and we didn't mind it because it was exciting it was fun This was the era of the big fund raiser No more of this have a little party at a local watering hole I mean we took the Hilton Hotel in San Francisco and Willie raised lots of money He had no qualms or compunctions about using the staff in the most meaningless tasks I mean I have parked cars

Then later on in the early eighties he had them celebrating at Pier 45 where he invited 16 000 people to a party My wife even got recruited for that one she was I mean we were always involved

WOLLENBERG This was even when you were staff of the committee?

CONNELLY Committee oh yes sure We would always check out I mean they were Friday nights or Thursday nights after hours so technically we weren't on duty It was a bit much to put staff to work like that but we all felt like we were part of a big something It was a happening We used to say it was a happening in those days and we were part of it

WOLLENBERG Did he dominate the other committee members?

CONNELLY Oh yes Well he did to the point where it cost him the speakership in 1975 as a matter of fact

WOLLENBERG Yes we've got to get to that

CONNELLY Willie was armed with an enormous amount of information and background and confidential information so he knew a lot about the legislation the bills He knew a lot about the budget too And when he had meetings with Ronald Reagan he went in pretty well armed and he often won because he knew more But members didn't like that He would start the committee at 9 00 in the morning sometimes he'd start it at 8 30 On regular Ways and Means meetings we might have 175 or 200 bills on the counter Well if you don't want to be there until the following morning at 9 00 you've got to get moving you know So a lot of times the members came in and they wanted to bring witnesses they wanted to read statements they'd make a dog and pony show out of it They'd bring their supporters and everybody is supposed to sit and listen patiently while the windbags ventilate [Laughter]

Willie wasn't having any of that! So a lot of times he'd call the number of the bill and the members always sit in the front row They'd get to their feet and get their papers and they'd be walking up to the podium and sit down and get the microphone adjusted Meanwhile he'd describe what the bill did how much money was involved in it who were the proponents who were the opponents what it was worth and he'd *call for a vote* And the guy the author hadn't even sat down yet!

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY And sometimes he d [snaps fingers] move these damn things the guy hardly got his butt on the chair before this bill was up or down So members didn t like that

WOLLENBERG But I guess that really meant he was dependent on you the staff

CONNELLY Yes

WOLLENBERG I mean he was getting information from his staff as opposed to getting it from a member

CONNELLY Well he you know spent a lot of time in his job So he knew the members he knew what they were doing he knew the issues There was always the issue it was always the cry Know your issue Don t get blindsided Know your issue Know what s really going on Know who the players are Know who the people are who wrote this thing Know which law firm which attorney in which law firm actually wrote this thing Be able to call that person up and say What in the hell were you thinking of when you did this? It contravenes or contradicts something that is in another part of your own bill! Hello? I mean we didn t write bills for people but we often we would find these things

WOLLENBERG So he would be armed with all that

CONNELLY And he was in a hurry and he enjoyed being the king of the roost and he enjoyed shooting from the hip and he didn t mind embarrassing some of these people Especially senators Senators didn t like that I ll tell you about one of them that was just really awful I mean he was really very rude to Willie Brown very racist and it was very ugly And I think there was a little bit of getting back at him He had members who didn t bring bills to Ways and

Means he had senators who didn't bring bills to Ways and Means by '74-'75 because they didn't want to be embarrassed or humiliated by him. He knew more about their bill than they did and he would tell them. [Laughter] He didn't mind telling them that the so-and-so is going to benefit from this thing or so-and-so organization and you know nobody liked that kind of stuff.

WOLLENBERG: Of course in dealing with senators he would have to deal with Randolph Collier.

CONNELLY: Yes.

WOLLENBERG: Was the head of the Senate's Finance Committee?

CONNELLY: Senate Finance Committee, yes.

WOLLENBERG: Which I guess is similar in nature to the Assembly Ways and Means.

CONNELLY: Similar in nature. And Randy Collier, the grey fox. And he was an awful old curmudgeon and an old thief and an alcoholic and a man that the last guy that you would have thought would be a buddy of Willie Brown but they became very good friends and they worked together very, very well. Randy liked him, he respected Willie. Willie didn't step on his toes, he made it a point to defer to him. You know the end of the budget process in May you have to reconcile the two versions of the budget which although they began with identical language by the time they had been amended three or four times in each house bore little resemblance to the original document.

WOLLENBERG: So each house had to approve the same budget?

CONNELLY: Well they created a Budget Conference Committee. And the conference bill is what goes on the floor and that can't be changed. That is up or down. So what you do in the conference [Laughter] is really what it's all about. So the

cognoscenti would aim for the conference committee. And as often as not you aimed to not be in the conference committee and you could do that by amending the budget. But when you drafted the amendments you drafted them to both bills.

WOLLENBERG: So they were identical?

CONNELLY: Identical. Right down to the punctuation, the spelling, and the organization on the piece of paper. Identical. You could hold them up to the light and you couldn't see anything on page two. That was the idea. If you did that, it was not a conference committee because there was no discrepancy, there was no disparity. [Laughter] And so if you had something, some skullduggery. One time Ray Sullivan, who was another one of the original staff, and I bought a park in southern Sacramento County. We spent a lot of money. It was several million dollars. It had been proposed and dropped out and. So we just put it in the damn conference notes. [Laughter] Nobody ever knew until the budget was published.

WOLLENBERG: A state park.

CONNELLY: And so Parks and Recreation has another park in south Sacramento. We didn't do that stuff very often, but we did it occasionally. I actually forgot an amendment. It was \$894,000. It is one of those things that is indelibly burned into your brain. It was for the highway patrol. The highway patrol had an amendment to the, an addendum to the Budget Act of '73, whatever it was, and it was for the purpose of buying their accouterments, their holsters and belts and all this kind of stuff, which is as expensive as hell. Maybe guns too, for all I know, maybe they had to buy their own guns. Anyhow, it was supposed to be

in there and I forgot it I didn't put it in the amendments The conference report was voted out of both houses And I saw it was gone and Rudy Nothenberg

WOLLENBERG We should talk about him too

CONNELLY He was the chief of staff at that time and he said Well hell let's just amend it again So we amended the thing again we just sent it out to the printing plant and it came back Well of course when you do that all the strikeouts and italics drop out So you had a clean bill [Laughter] People said What happened? Oh it was a technical glitch you know there were six anomalies and we had to demitigate them In those days the press was so beknighted they didn't even know we did it The agency Finance said What in the hell happened here? There is a new bill out here this morning! But we got the highway patrol's money back in And because all the strikeouts had dropped out nobody knew which title it was that changed It was beautiful [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG That's a great story

CONNELLY I mean you know the risks in that is someone who was so inclined criminally inclined can also play games

WOLLENBERG Can slip stuff in

CONNELLY Can slip stuff in Now a lot of stuff gets slipped into the budget not that way anymore But a lot of stuff got slipped into the budget and at the end and I left here in 1995 the senate slipped in an amendment that cost a great deal of money to the assembly contingency fund And they did it illegally They changed well they didn't do it illegally They changed their version of the conference report and it got absorbed into the final conference report and we

ended up not We trusted them We didn't think that they would do that to us And they did it

WOLLENBERG I guess this conference committee in effect would be Willie Brown and Randy Collier sitting there pretty much making the final decisions

CONNELLY Right Well actually they were the principals and then there would be two members from each house and usually one member of the minority party So it would be Willie and a Democrat and a Republican and Randy had the same thing

WOLLENBERG What about Bob Moretti? Would he come in?

CONNELLY No he rarely

WOLLENBERG He is speaker you think he would want control of all this

CONNELLY No no he never wanted to be there Smart politicians always want to have someone else make the decisions because otherwise it stops there You've lost your maneuvering room If you go to him then he could have Willie do whatever needed to be done But in the early days right in '71 '72 we used to meet in the senate lounge There would be staff persons from the Senate Finance Committee staff which was much smaller there was only two guys on the senate side I can't remember Bob something What a piece of work he was and a woman who was a secretary And then Willie had six or seven of us and the five the six members We would meet in the members lounge and there was no public present Nobody saw what the hell we did

WOLLENBERG So staff was involved in this conference committee

CONNELLY Oh yes and that was the first time the staff had ever been But it got so big that [Laughter] they couldn't remember what they were doing But they always

had Finance in there and Finance used to write the notes. And he who writes the notes controls the meeting. It's like the winners always write the history of the war. Well, the guy who wrote the Finance guy, he wrote

WOLLENBERG: This is the State Department of Finance?

CONNELLY: He wrote, "This is what you guys did." I said, "Well, I don't remember doing that!" Well, these are my notes, so. So after a while we were there, and so we got that playing field a little bit leveled out. But before we got to that, we closed the budget in late April, early May, and each of the subcommittees would produce a report that was their part of the budget bill. And that had to be voted on. Many times that was done at Frank Fat's or down here at The Firehouse.

WOLLENBERG: At bars and restaurants.

CONNELLY: And *lobbyists*, the *lobbyists* would pay for it. We would get in there, and the liquor would flow, you'd have a big dinner, and then waiters would clear the table, and we'd have the subcommittee reports. Well, by 8:30, and you know four martinis, it was anybody's guess what the hell was going into that. [Laughter] So it behooved us to keep good records and good notes, and Willie expected us to do that. He didn't expect the staff to be under the influence of anything, man or beast, or liquor.

WOLLENBERG: So you'd be at Frank Fat's.

CONNELLY: Oh, yes, we'd be there. [Laughter] I remember one time, it wasn't a director of finance, but it was a deputy director of finance, fell face down in the salad bowl.

WOLLENBERG: [Laughter]

CONNELLY And we thought we were going to have to do the Heimlich maneuver
 [Laughter] But of course that has all stopped now I mean they do it in public
 and you know it's enormously boring and it's a lot harder for the lobbyists in
 the Third House and the rest of these guys to slip stuff in But they still slip
 plenty of stuff in Plenty of stuff gets in the bills You see it all the time

WOLLENBERG What were Brown's relationships with Ronald Reagan himself or with Reagan
 and his staff?

CONNELLY You know Reagan had been in the movie colony and Brown was no novelty
 He'd seen lots of people like Willie Brown In fact I've always thought that the
 movie industry produces so many people in politics because they start out the
 same way they have the same kind of personalities the same kind of
 effervescence the same kind of show off the same kind of egomania very
 little difference And over the years we had some contact with the movie
 industry and movie personalities and I saw a lot of the characteristics
 duplicated in the membership

Willie taught everybody a lesson around here You know he never
 articulated it specifically but his proposal was people come to Sacramento as
 members or as proponents exponents of a bill or staff or whatever And they
 fall into one of two categories people who come up to Sacramento who strut
 their stuff these are the people who just want to play Then there is the second
 category of people who want to win And there is a world of difference
 Many many many organizations come to Sacramento and fritter away their
 capital because they don't want to win they just want to strut they want to
 play they want to pretend Willie was always a pragmatist He wanted to win

And he knew that the governor had a blue pencil and if he annoyed him if he got under his skin really effectively it would cost Willie points He would lose in his issues

WOLLENBERG That's because unlike the federal government the state governor has a line item veto

CONNELLY A line item veto that's right [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG He can veto line items in the budget

CONNELLY That's right And every governor has had lots of fun with that And Willie knew that the governor through the Department of Finance would veto items You know the governor proposes the legislature disposes but the governor spends the money You can override a veto you can do anything you want to but if the governor doesn't want to spend the money he simply tells the financial people Don't Don't No And if he says no it isn't going to happen So there was no point in having a quarrel because we did so many things in conjunction there were many places where we were in agreement You know buying parks You know there's the day we bought the Candlestick Park most of which was underwater under the bay down there in San Francisco

WOLLENBERG The state park at Candlestick Point

CONNELLY Yes I mean much of it is still underwater

WOLLENBERG So that was part of a deal?

CONNELLY Sure it was a deal Willie wanted to do that and Reagan wanted to do something else and I've forgotten what the particular exchange was but there was an exchange And you know it is never a bad thing to build parks unless

you are doing what Randy Collier was doing. In those days he would find a piece of logged over north state real estate that had been logged and there wasn't anything left to the place. And he wanted to exchange that for some BLM [Bureau of Land Management] lands or for some state school lands. In the early days of this state when they set up the arrangement there were two sections in every township in California that were there to support schools. But they are not all distributed in two sections. Many of them are consolidated

WOLLENBERG In chunks

CONNELLY So there would be these places up there where he'd want to trade school land for a park. And these people would donate this land, this redwood land, and then you go up and look at it and you know the tractors had made a shambles of the thing, there was nothing there. And that is what got him in trouble finally, those kind of exchanges, and he finally got deposed over here, he got bounced out of here by Tony Bielsen and [President pro Tem] Jim Mills in the senate when I was working up there later on. But generally speaking building parks was a new idea. Local government, local support for local parks and beaches and that kind of stuff. I mean, there was a lot of politics, there was a lot of questionable dark deals. But the truth is that you had people going out to beach parks and you had facilities out there to park and you had toilets and you had somebody to clean the place up and you had lifeguards. That was a positive public benefit. Now, if some local government, if some individual got some advantage out of that, it probably happened. It's been happening since the days of the Roman Empire and it will continue to happen. [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY It is how government works

WOLLENBERG Well was it your sense that Willie Brown was doing all this exposing all this because he wanted better public policy or because this was politically advantageous? It was a way of gaining his political power?

CONNELLY Oh both

WOLLENBERG Both

CONNELLY Both yes He was learning I mean he had not had this kind of power until Bob Moretti pointed him to Ways and Means He hadn't had this kind of exposure And he gained stature he rose to the occasion he was the Harry Truman syndrome Everybody said to Moretti Well you're giving it to that crazy guy from San Francisco you know What the hell does he know about anything? And he knew it turned out he knew a lot about a lot of things And he built his reputation for being informed In a world where half information misinformation is the standard currency the person who is in command of the facts has [Laughter] a distinct advantage And Willie was more often than not was in command of the facts And if he wasn't in command of the facts he would make up any parts that were missing

And he was not above dissembling a little bit not above dropping certain facts out if they were not immediately convenient But he knew what he was talking about and if you looked behind the rhetoric you often found that he did know what he was talking about So it was not a good idea to stand up and to throw any verbal abuse at Willie So he was learning how to be a statewide leader how to be a big player a big player He never acknowledged it he never would say it but Willie used to follow a practice that was very apparent

to someone who was close enough to watch it

Wilhe filled vacancies He filled vacuums If he saw something that wasn't happening he'd make something happen there he'd move into that void he'd fill that void He'd raise that issue He would temper this other issue He would tamp something down he would build something up But he was always filling voids And the legislature was still learning I mean they had been a part time legislature a hick cow country legislature it looked like Montana over there in the early sixties when I went to work [tape interruption] It was metamorphising you know we'd had the organizational change AB 1 of 1966 was already in place for four or five years but they were still learning how to implement it

WOLLENBERG AB 1 that turned them into a full time legislature?

CONNELLY A full time legislature The senate was still reacting to the fact that there was a one man one vote provision

WOLLENBERG That was what '67?

CONNELLY '67 yes You know it had all changed The rules were changed and the dynamics were changed Now Los Angeles County I mean they could ignore Los Angeles County when one member represented it Now Los Angeles was represented by three or four members in a forty member senate

WOLLENBERG I guess somewhere in this process Phil Isenberg went on to become mayor of Sacramento and Rudy Nothenberg became chief of staff?

CONNELLY Rudy came up I mean Phil I think he first went on the city council I was walking precincts for him the first of many precincts I walked over the years and a dog bit me on the rump!

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY I was always resentful I used to throw that up to Phil every time I'd see him and he'd laugh and he'd say Well you've got to learn to be quicker on your feet

But he left and Rudy Nothenberg who was a fabulously interesting very enormously competent man a German Jew whose parents had run a small department store in Berlin Rudy is maybe three or four years older than I so he was probably six or eight years old when the Nazis came to power His father was arrested in maybe '36 or '37 and put into Dachau one of the early concentration camps His mother ever the pragmatist went to the Gestapo and said What's it going to take to get him out of prison and for us to get out of the country? And their answer was Everything So they signed over some kind of phony sale of everything they had and they were apparently quite well to do They had a small sum of money Rudy and I believe a sister and they applied to the American Embassy and of course we told them No room in the inn

They got to Genoa in Italy took a train got out of Germany They got on a ship The only country that would take them the only country that would accept the Jewish refugees was China They took a ship from Genoa to Shanghai and they hadn't been in Shanghai for twenty minutes when the Japanese bombed the place into rubble The Japanese took over and they rounded up *all* the Europeans Now they didn't hate Jews they hated [Laughter] all Europeans

So Rudy spent most of the Second World War in a concentration camp in

and around Shanghai and he made his living and supported his family by dodging up to the anti aircraft gun emplacements and stealing the brass cartridge cases. The Japanese soldiers actually shot at him on several occasions while he was doing this and he'd sell them in exchange for food. They also got some food packages through the Red Cross. The Japanese were not racist they just [Laughter] didn't like any Europeans.

At the end of the war he was working on an American warship in the harbor in Shanghai and somebody suggested maybe he ought to go to the United States and he through a relief agency got to California and brought his family over. His father couldn't get in because he had contracted tuberculosis in Dachau. And they had a heck of a time getting him in. His mother later got reparations from the German government.

But Rudy had been through the wars with Willie in San Francisco. He had been through the Free Speech Movement and certainly was present when [President S. I.] Hayakawa quelled the riots at San Francisco State College.

WOLLENBERG: The faculty and students' strike at San Francisco State in 1968.

CONNELLY: Yes. Rudy was running an aid station in the student union. He was an accountant. He was training as an accountant and he was involved with one of the big rock music groups in the early middle sixties. But he was always Willie's confidant and his fiscal guy. He was the guy that always said, "I don't care if you don't owe any taxes. Pay \$1,500. Pay \$2,000. I want the record to show that you got a refund. I don't want the record to show that you underpaid your taxes."

[End of Tape 4 Side B]

[Begin Tape 5 Side A]

WOLLENBERG We were talking about Rudy Nothenberg and his coming to Sacramento

CONNELLY Yes Rudy came in and this probably was '73 1973 Rudy just a brilliant man He had a good grasp he had an instantaneous grasp of the major issues He was already a professional accountant so the arcane trivia of the budget posed no problem at all for him And under Rudy we really learned how to mine the budget Because there's always all kinds of money in the budget There were then there is today hundreds of special funds and esoteric little funds that exist in the back of the budget Then there are reappropriations pages and pages and pages of reappropriations written in a language that is designed to be *absolutely* incomprehensible What it means is that an appropriation that was made years ago if nothing is done after three years many of these things revert So you would have a reappropriation while some agency was trying to get their act together And there was all kinds of cash set aside for those things So if you knew how to read them you could find money for a special project Some agencies were aghast [Laughter] when they discovered that their reappropriation had disappeared but we would drop the reappropriation and we would reappropriate the money for another purpose

WOLLENBERG For another purpose

CONNELLY And the counsel would go crazy they would say Well that's not germane to the original appropriation what are you doing? So we said Well it is a lot like it you know We were talking about water in the first place and we are talking about a park this time and so there is water and water is usually associated with parks We drove everybody crazy You know it was germane

if we said it was germane essentially And he was very good at that

WOLLENBERG So he became the

CONNELLY Chief committee consultant

WOLLENBERG He wasn't the chief of Brown's staff?

CONNELLY Well he stayed in an advisory role and saw to it that people who were raising money on Brown's behalf were careful of what they were doing and who they were We always got everybody's name In those days you didn't have these reporting requirements you know that you have now It wasn't until Jerry Brown pushed the Political Reform Act of 1974 that you even had to report your holdings So you could anybody could do anything and the lobbyists didn't have to report to anybody at all And if they did it was so superficial that you didn't learn anything in the report But Rudy anticipated all that stuff and we knew or he knew who was giving Brown money what their name address And it wasn't a post office box He said Nobody lives in a post office box he used to say

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY Somebody has an address And we were also very good about it if the question came up if it was an organization or an association that was raising money we knew who the association was what their name was

WOLLENBERG You knew that a real person had made the contribution

CONNELLY And where they work yes So that kind of stuff So he was very cautious

WOLLENBERG Is there any story you could tell a brief story that gives a sense of what you think you accomplished going through this process as a staff?

CONNELLY Well I'll tell you one thing that did happen in that area is actually it was a

little earlier it was in 1972 In 1970 there was a collision of two Standard Oil tankers under the Golden Gate Bridge

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY In the fall And they ran into each other They were watching each other [Laughter] on radar and the two ships crashed and there was a major oil spill It ended up the tide was ebbing and it ended up along the San Mateo coast and it was an awful mess It was a big expensive mess and it was a wake up call because it scared a lot of people realizing that the choke point of the Golden Gate itself was a very very dangerous place for ships under any circumstances [Laughter] Historically it has always been the Golden Gate channel is replete with wrecks

So I was then and am now a licensed airplane pilot and I was struck with the idea that ships were approaching San Francisco Bay with complete sangfroid They just did whatever they damn pleased Day or night they just steamed in and generally they would stay on the right side of the channel but that was the only requirement whereas if you were flying into San Francisco International Airport approach control picked you up fifty miles away and vectored you to an approach and you stayed in a very rigid pattern until the aircraft landed because it was insane to let people do it on their own Yet we had tankers and ammunition ships this was the Vietnam War anything could have happened in there And many things have happened in the Golden Gate channel

WOLLENBERG I guess that you had nuclear powered submarines coming in out of the bay

CONNELLY Absolutely And you know the city is sort of right next to that I mean it's not

like you've got a buffer zone it's not like the Straits of Juan de Fuca up there in Seattle where if you had an accident it's 150 miles from Seattle This was in downtown San Francisco And if you had another oil spill or an explosion say you took the bridge out you know And enough ships have hit the bridge abutments on the Golden Gate Bridge over the years so it's not an unlikely occurrence

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY So anyhow I went to Brown I said Why don't we write a bill where we'll make an approach control system for San Francisco and all the ports in California? He said Yes go ahead and write the bill So we drafted the bill for San Diego Long Beach San Francisco and Arcata I think that's all And the idea was to set up an approach control system that the State Department of Transportation would run and it would be based on a radar approach and a published I mean you publish approach plates for San Francisco and any big airport and you are obliged to have the plate with you and to know what the procedures are and to adhere to radio frequencies and et cetera

So we put that all into a bill We introduced the bill This is maybe the better part of a year after the collision so it was very timely And the Coast Guard told me they just said It's crazy First of all it's unconstitutional It interferes with interstate commerce and it's inappropriate for you to do it it's an insane thing you cannot do this ships are different than airplanes it's stupid it's wasteful it will never work You know We got it out of the assembly because we got everything out of the assembly [Laughter]

And we went over to the senate and we had it set in the Transportation

Committee on the senate side As the bill's staff I would go along and Brown sat there and the committee met at 1 30 in the afternoon after a good lunch often paid for by the Third House We sat there and we sat there and we sat there and 4 00 came And every other presenter every other assembly and senate presenter had had their bill heard and the chairman I've forgotten who it was looked around he said Well I think that's it for today And they adjourned leaving us sitting out there Willie got up never said a word never he came back the next week and we kept it up and we got the bill But out of the committee but we didn't get it out of the senate

Meanwhile the Coast Guard and the Federal Department of Transportation which the Coast Guard operates said you know It's not a really bad idea and it would be a lot better idea if it was our idea too [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY So we dropped the bill And within a year or two the Federal Coast Guard set up the Vessel Traffic Approach Control System which extends to this day all up and down this coast and in New Orleans and New York and Boston approach all these places And what's really funny the Coast Guard who hated that bill and said we were madmen and tamperers uses it ever after whenever the federal agency got hit with a request to make a reduction in their budget every president since Jimmy Carter and they'd always say Well we'll offer up the Vessel Control Program knowing that it was the one program that the industry would not let them drop because it was so valuable The insurance companies loved it We haven't had a crash in San Francisco Bay since then So Willie carried the bill

WOLLENBERG What happened to that? Did he ever take retaliation against that senator?

CONNELLY Well I think that might have had something to do with his attitude towards the senate members when they came in I mean I remember him making a grown man a senior senator he came in and Willie tap danced around him so fast presenting his bill for him and getting a vote for it that the man broke down in tears He cried The man in front of the whole committee I mean the place was jammed And he never brought another bill to Ways and Means the rest of the time while he was there And you know sometimes what goes around does come around again and that might have been one of the members of that committee I don't recall But it was that kind of stuff you know

They used to call Willie the little nigger You used to hear that You would never hear it in the assembly But the Third House used to say it And when he ran for speaker in the middle seventies you used to hear this phrase That little nigger is never going to be Can you imagine that! I mean this is only twenty five or thirty years ago

WOLLENBERG Yes This is after the Civil Rights movement

CONNELLY Yes Well you would have thought so but it hadn't reached everybody

WOLLENBERG Well I guess speaking of that in 1974 Bob Moretti decided to run for governor and I guess the strategy was that he would step out and Willie Brown would take over as speaker

CONNELLY That's right In fact Willie's birthday is in March and usually March was a big fund raiser and I remember I was down in San Francisco doing some menial task probably Moretti and Willie were up on the stage and they were laughing and giggling about how they were going to hand the baton and we were

going to go on and the Third House had been cudgeled into buying the tables at the fund raiser were all applauding right on Then an orchestra was playing all the rest of that stuff And you know it just didn't [Laughter] have a ring of authenticity to it I mean it was still 1974 '75 and we weren't that advanced Moretti made his abortive run [Laughter] for governor and that didn't amount to anything He was a man who was I mean he would have been a good consigliere for the Mafia I mean he was very street smart and he was very competent and he was very aggressive and he was very take charge and get it done but Bob Moretti was no gentleman and he didn't have much finesse about it And he didn't have the baton to pass it wasn't his to pass

WOLLENBERG Was he sincere about that?

CONNELLY Oh I think he was I mean he could see a time when you know you would have Willie as the speaker and he would be the governor I think at that point Ken Cory was going to run or was running or maybe already was the controller so half the state constitutional officers would be from a coterie of pals from the late fifties and the early sixties Yes the prospect was a nice one but it didn't have much reality to it You know you need forty one votes [Laughter] to get to be speaker and that's a pretty important number I think the best Willie ever came up with was thirteen or fourteen votes that he could really count on and we were out beating the bushes for them I remember he sent me one time to see Miller the assemblyman Miller

WOLLENBERG John Miller from Oakland/Berkeley?

CONNELLY John Miller because they had had a falling out they were mad about something You know Willie had done a lot of personal favors for Miller

earlier on I mean he had really Miller had some real health problems and Willie had been very good to him about it And he had reason they were colleagues they had the same persuasion the same political philosophy

WOLLENBERG Both liberal Democrats

CONNELLY Both liberal Democrats And Miller was mad mad at him So he sent me down there to see if I could find out what it was that he was so sore about I mean he knew some of the things he was sore about and you know you always bruise people's egos and it's a narrow corridor and you get bumped you know Then you have to learn how to get bumped and keep smiling We never did find out what was bothering Miller but we didn't get his vote Then we had a Hispanic guy from Bakersfield and he was sort of key because if he came over several others might come with him and he might be able to put together a coalition But he was still a long ways from forty one I remember Ida came in one day she said Could you fly the chairman to Bakersfield?

WOLLENBERG Ida Charleston his secretary

CONNELLY Ida Charleston his secretary I said Well sure So I got a plane and Brown did not like little airplanes [Laughter] I don't think he liked big airplanes but he sure as hell didn't like little airplanes We went out we climbed into this thing It was late in the afternoon and it was winter so it got dark early We flew down and landed at Bakersfield and we went to a dinner that this member was throwing or was being thrown in his behalf And Willie got up and he made the best speech I have ever heard him make on the subject of *Brown vs the Board of Education* There were many black people Bakersfield has a large black community I didn't realize that but there were quite a few

people there And Willie was *very* enthusiastically received and he made a really impassioned speech on behalf of equality in education and the consequences of *Brown v Board of Education* and the consequences of this whole issue for minority people and jobs and housing and opportunities for education all that kind of stuff And I thought Man I would have bought one [Laughter]

They had a raffle at the end and they came in and shook me down for ten bucks for a raffle ticket and they fed us a pretty good dinner of rubber chicken or something whatever it was We flew back and we were flying back up it was 11 00 or 11 30 at night I was flying the plane and we were up above Merced Castle Air Force Base there and he said You know I'm cold And so I pulled the heater on and I said Well what do you think Mr Brown? He says Nah he'll double cross me And he did of course [Laughter] So ever the realist

WOLLENBERG Yes And the competition was Leo McCarthy another San Francisco Democrat

CONNELLY Yes You know there were a lot of things in McCarthy's column He was white he was sort of the old school old school gentleman kind of a thing there was no baggage on him like Willie I mean he hadn't been antiwar he hadn't represented prostitutes and drug dealers on the street in San Francisco He was the right sort you know And the Third House would have settled on anybody like that or anybody it was anybody but Willie

WOLLENBERG Anybody but Willie

CONNELLY Anybody but Willie And they just weren't going to have this uppity smart ass

sassy irreverent guy who would tell them to stick it in their ear. They didn't like that. The Third House didn't like that. You know, that's a very conservative group, too. Big corporations don't hire jive talking street hip bozos to be lobbyists. Many of them are ex-members, and many of them had a great portentous sense of themselves. I mean, the oil industry, or they called it The Highway Institute, the concrete community, you know, they weren't accustomed to having people tell them No. And Willie told them No. I mean, I had a guy come in to see me one time at Ways and Means before this happened. He said, 'We're the ones that glue down these red and blue and yellow spots on the highway, and we have this special glue that's really great.' I said, 'Well, it's just epoxy anyway. I mean, epoxy is not a trade name. I mean, it's a commodity.'

He said, 'Well, we need to have these specifications written into the bill.' And I said, 'No, I'm not going to do that.' And Willie said, 'No, we're not going to do that, why would we do that?' And they were astonished when the specifications got written out. They had had this nice little thing going for them for years and years and years, and that's the sort of thing that really annoyed the Third House. I mean, they had thought they had a right, through having served their time and having served their interests, and walked the walk and strutted around and gone to the fund raisers, they thought they were entitled. And Willie would say [Laughter] 'No, you're not entitled to it! What are you talking about, entitled? Show me in the statutes or the constitution where your entitlement is written, and we'll talk.' They said, 'Well, we've always done it this way.' Well, always done it this way, doesn't get it. So he

didn't have much support from the Third House

WOLLENBERG I guess the way he operated also didn't win him a lot of support among members

CONNELLY No Because you know the one thing you can't do with members is you can't laugh at them you can't make them the object of a joke Whether he ever intended to do it and I'm sure he intended to do it sometimes but inadvertently he'd get going and he feeds on himself and he has always done that So the longer he goes on a speech the wilder it gets and the crazier things he says

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY And he'd get to listening to himself He's like any good standup comedian I mean he worked on he developed his own material and then he builds on it And that offended people who weren't as quick on their feet There are many inarticulate haltingly inarticulate people who find their way into public policy who could not make a barn burner speech if their lives depended on it and are *not* good at thinking on their feet I don't know if we mentioned it last time we talked about Willie and the Greek colonels?

WOLLENBERG No

CONNELLY Oh [Laughter] He came to me one day and he said I'm going to be on television I'm in Los Angeles on a PBS station TV station and we're going to be talking about the Greek government He said Well what do you know about it? I said Well I know that some right wing neo fascist anti Communist colonels have taken over the country and turned it into essentially a de facto fascist dictatorship And he said Give me some news So I ran

over to the state library and I pulled *Time* magazine up and I had four or five pages of information on the structure the problem of the Greek civil war and the advancement of the colonels and the deposing of the constitutionally appointed and elected officers

And I came rushing back in and it's 4:00 or 4:15 and the thing is at 6:30 in Los Angeles. He said, "Jump in the car with me" and the sergeant drove us out to the airport. And on the way out there I've got these notes, you know, we used to do them on yellow paper with twenty point type and I'm telling him about it. I didn't know a hell of a lot about it [Laughter] but I knew a lot more than I had known at noon that day.

So we get to the airport and he grabs the notes and he runs in and jumps on the airplane and I ran home and I turned the television set on. And it looked like Willie was representing the State Department. He was temperate in his remarks, he was judicious in his assignment of cause and effect. He sounded like he was from the Greek desk at the State Department. And I thought, you know, that is an example of being a quick study. That man is a very, very bright man, who can pick up on things in a very short order and then he can take the material to the point where he then uses his own personality and his own articulateness to enhance it. I've seen him do it many times since but that was the first time I saw him do it.

WOLLENBERG But as a still relatively young guy in the 1970s, he was doing it in a way that annoyed the other members.

CONNELLY Oh, he annoyed them, oh, yes. You know, nobody can stand to be shown up and they can't stand to have someone who is patently, overtly smarter.

[Laughter] than they are And Willie was patently and overtly smarter than most of them And he always was And he didn't do it because he was just quick he did it because he was trying really hard Later on when he was the speaker he was working fourteen sixteen hours a day I mean some of those hours were down in local watering holes and he was sitting there talking to people he was sitting in his office because I have waited hours he'd always see the members before he'd see staff and I'd wait hours until 7 00 8 00 9 00 at night while he was talking to members about everything from you know what color shirt to wear with that necktie to political issues to economic issues to bills and budget activity He worked and he worked and he worked and he always knew what was going on

And he lived on that He himself knew a lot because he had direct daily constant contact with the members and the Third House he knew them all They all came they used to approach him like some princeling in the

WOLLENBERG But this is later though this is when he was speaker

CONNELLY This is later But he grew into it And he learned how if you want to be a leader you've got to work your butt off He did He always worked harder than anybody over there You could drive by the Capitol late at night and you could see his office from the third floor of the historic capitol on the other side later on when he was speaker And Ways and Means because he was in the same corner of the building when he was Ways and Means chairman And the lights would be on there they'd be off in the rest of the building People would remark on that you know I came out of Frank Fats at 11 30 and I walked by to get my car and his lights were on up there What are you guys doing up

there in Ways and Means? What are you doing up there in the speaker's office?

WOLLENBERG So McCarthy won the speakership in 1974

CONNELLY He won it hands down. You know those things are brutal and they are bruising and things get said in the course of it you know the reporters bait the members into saying something that they perhaps wish [Laughter] later they hadn't said

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY And when McCarthy won when Willie was deposed he had to be you know it's just like if you read medieval history you'll know a lot about [Laughter] how the legislature works you know I mean the ascension of the pope through the period of the Renaissance has much in common with the structure and the process and the apparatus. So when he became speaker he couldn't have Willie beheaded or put in the tower so he sent him to Coventry. He gave him the smallest office in the building some little one room thing this tiny little thing

Then they took the squawk box away from him. I thought that was that was the epitome of pettiness. Every office in the Capitol has a radio in effect it has a dial on it you can tune in the floor or you can dial in the committee rooms and listen to what is going on squawk box. It is your key because a lot of times they would be off the floor and they would be waiting for something so you could stay abreast. They came in and they disconnected his squawk box. I happened to be standing in his office. I wasn't working for him at that time happened to be standing there when the guy came in the technician he

was so embarrassed and Willie helped him move the desk so that they could disconnect the thing and take it out. Didn't even give him a squawk box. They would have taken away his parking place if they thought they could have gotten away with it.

WOLLENBERG: So they not only deposed him as chair.

CONNELLY: Oh, yes.

WOLLENBERG: But they kicked him off the Ways and Means committee.

CONNELLY: Oh, yes, everything. He had some minor committee assignments. He stayed in for a couple of years, two years. [Laughter] But the problem was that he was still the smartest guy around. And at some point you realize that you haven't got that many generals. It was like the American Civil War when we started fighting the war, we realized that we needed all kinds of guys, including you know, the drunks and the incompetents and the guys that had been cashiers otherwise we would never have heard of Ulysses S. Grant.

WOLLENBERG: This was right at the time, or within a few years, when Proposition 13 was passed.

CONNELLY: That was 1978. Well, by that time Willie was the chairman of the Revenue and Taxation Committee. [Laughter] I mean, you know, at some point you don't have that much talent around. And the legislature was growing, the size of the annual budgets were growing, population was growing, the issues were burgeoning, they were exploding, and you couldn't get away with it, you couldn't afford to have a smart, competent, experienced person sitting on the sidelines. You just couldn't do that.

WOLLENBERG: So Leo McCarthy eventually was willing to bring him out of the cold.

CONNELLY Sure Well he was resurrected Liz Kirsten was his staff person on the Revenue and Taxation Committee and I don't think Willie knew a hell of a lot about the tax code when he went on it but he knew a lot about it very shortly thereafter and he saw these things coming and he was an authority on the tax code He was not as flamboyant because he had learned that that was not a good idea He was never that kind of flamboyant again to members He always called himself the members' speaker when he finally became speaker

WOLLENBERG Because he ?

CONNELLY Because he realized that you can't afford to antagonize people But he was still the same old Willie And we all still worked for him If he wanted something he'd call us up I mean when I was working in the other house he called me up and I'd go do something for him

WOLLENBERG Because you went on to the Senate Finance Committee

CONNELLY Yes I stayed on Ways and Means for another year under John Foran Then I left and went to the Senate Finance Committee This was after Tony Bielsonson had replaced Randolph Collier In fact a lot of us showed up there Liz Kirsten worked over there with me They were trying to sort of modernize You know Jerry Hayward was there people who had made a name for themselves in their expertise and specialty

WOLLENBERG Hayward was an education specialist

CONNELLY He was an education guy

WOLLENBERG Yes So in effect under Bielsonson the Senate Finance Committee was trying to emulate Brown's Ways and Means

CONNELLY Was recapitulating the actions of the Ways and Means Committee And they

did. It became a first class operation.

WOLLENBERG: Were your duties pretty much the same?

CONNELLY: Well, they were, but it was a much smaller staff and the same sized budget. For a while, I had the University of California and the state college budgets. And I must say that I was not as well briefed and grounded. But I used to be annoyed that the university had a lobby team in the building and they used to send professors up. They'd get groups of people and they'd come up on issues often pay issues, ten year longevity, this kind of thing. The university was coming in, it was usually that, or some building they wanted to build someplace. They were sort of haughty and they came on as they were visiting his royal highness, was visiting, you know, the rural rustics and was going to give them some information. And they always managed to annoy. I mean, the worst witnesses that you can bring to a hearing in the legislature are university professors, by and large, because they tend to, you know, have seven page single spaced statements that they want to read.

But anyhow, a young woman came in from the *Daily Californian* which was, I think at that date, was still owned by the university.

WOLLENBERG: Yes, at some point they became independent of university control.

CONNELLY: They became independent. And she comes in, I said, Well, I don't work for Willie Brown anymore, this is a whole different operation. I'll be happy to do background, deep background. We'll go through everything, but not for attribution. Under those circumstances we'll do it. So we talked and I tend to say things sometimes, as [Laughter] you and I have discovered, which are perhaps more colorful than they need to be. And during the course of that

interview I described the university's representatives as a bunch of thugs wearing \$600 silk suits. And that was her lead the next morning in her story in the *Daily Californian* and she had tape recorded me.

WOLLENBERG: And this was supposed to be background.

CONNELLY: And it wasn't supposed to be tape recorded. She had the microphone hidden. And I was well, I was embarrassed, but Bielsenson didn't like it a bit, because he had a much different view of things than did Willie. Willie always had a problem with the university and he always said that they were a bit elitist. Later on, when he was a Board of Regents member [Laughter] there were some very interesting moments.

WOLLENBERG: [Laughter] Yes, I'll bet!

CONNELLY: But anyhow, I complained and that young lady was removed from her position. But it taught me a valuable lesson about junior journalists. Senior journalists would never do something like that. But people who are comers and strikers and people who are trying to make it are tempted to do those kind of rash things. And it's something you have to remember when you're dealing with folks.

WOLLENBERG: Bielsenson was a pretty powerful man in the legislature at that time. What was it like working with him compared to Willie?

CONNELLY: Well, it was a world of difference. He was very laid back. In fact, I was astonished when I first went to work for him to learn that he was not interested in having analysis done on every bill before the Senate Finance Committee. I mean, I didn't know how to react to that, because I didn't see how you could operate if the chairman was not apprised of the details and the facts and salient

issues in a piece of legislation He used to say Robert is it a nice bill? I said Well Senator I m not sure what you mean by that It s grammatically correct

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY But you know it s somebody doing something to somebody else And he didn t want to do that He was aloof He was a very aloof man I was there for a year a year and a half and it was not a difficult time I mean he was a nice guy I think he went on to Congress shortly thereafter

Then Al Rodda came in Al Rodda grandfatherly type of guy very old school aging liberal nice guy a very decent human being but again very different from Ways and Means And the senate is a very different place They don t want any of this roughneck stuff they don t want any rough and tumble they don t want anybody embarrassing anybody I mean the name of the game was steady on don t rock the boat And I had been there before I was there with Petris I knew many of them and by this time I was what thirty three thirty four something like that thirty five

WOLLENBERG So it wasn t as much fun?

CONNELLY Oh no it wasn t any fun at all so and that s when the opportunity to go and be the chief deputy director over at the Department of Forestry I was ready to go

[End of Tape 5 Side A]

[Begin Tape 5 Side B]

WOLLENBERG When you were on the staff of the Senate Finance Committee it was during that period in 1978 that Prop 13 passed

CONNELLY Oh yes

WOLLENBERG And as a staff member of the Senate Finance Committee you must have had to deal with the impacts and the effects of that

CONNELLY Yes Prop 13 happened because of the wild inflationary spiral that was going on in California in the late seventies annual inflation rates of 10 percent 12 percent 13 percent home values were going through the roof and people who were living on fixed incomes and people who weren't living on fixed incomes feared greatly and to some extent rightly that left unrestrained the property taxes would continue to reflect escalating neighborhood property values even though the house hadn't changed hands And in point of fact that is what happened

WOLLENBERG As the assessment went up each year the property taxes went up

CONNELLY Each time a house changed hands on a street the whole street went up Now this was a problem that the legislature could have and should have solved There were mechanisms that could have been placed in statute and it could have given some respite it would have been a relatively simple thing to do But [Howard] Jarvis and [Paul] Gann and their pals found an issue and they rode it to statewide prominence and they convinced people that not only was property tax unjust but that Sacramento was a perpetrator of it and that we had huge amounts of money that could easily replace any lost revenues as a consequence of Prop 13 All they had to do was to force the issue by a constitutional amendment which was Proposition 13 and then the legislature would in fact be forced to relinquish these huge sums of money that they were holding

Well unfortunately they were partly right because one of the consequences

of the inflationary spiral that was going on in the late seventies was that the state's treasury was full. And we did have very large sums of money surpluses accumulating perhaps as much as seven or eight billion dollars which was in those days an extravagantly large sum of money huge amount of money people couldn't conceive of it.

WOLLENBERG The state budget was only \$10 billion or \$12 billion.

CONNELLY Yes, it was almost a whole year's revenue. And the people who were in favor of Prop. 13 managed to convince themselves that not only this year 1978 but every year those huge sums of money would be available to replace lost local revenues. In perpetuity there would be money in Sacramento to replace lost revenue. Also a number of people were under the impression that their property taxes were sent to Sacramento. Very few people understand the tax structure and there was a lot of hyperbole a lot of foolishness spoken. So a lot of homeowners thought Well why should I pay these high and potentially higher property taxes when that money is just going up to Sacramento and Sacramento is already overflowing with money? Well in point of fact that's not true. The property taxes stay local and they pay for schools and roads and highways and city government and county government and they are an integral part of local finances and always have been.

Notwithstanding as we say in the legislature it passed. And there was a mad scramble because now the public had spoken and they were very pleased with themselves they had really taught those rascals in Sacramento a lesson. They had risen up and as a body they had shown the wisdom of the individual faceless normally faceless taxpayer in enacting this constitutional

amendment and equity and fairness in the distribution of governmental monies would follow forever

Well it was a veritable crock of you know what It was awful But what happened is immediately local governments and school districts and city governments county governments realized that they were not going to have enough money I mean this thing took effect when it was passed So there was no grace period there was no time to make plans They needed to know how they were going to open the schools that fall and how they were going to pay for the other activities at local levels which normally came from property taxes and they weren't going to have enough money We did have a big surplus So it was a self fulfilling prophecy See they really had the money And there was a huge bill SB 7 I think was the number of it and it was the bill of bills It was right in July right after the passage of Prop 13 and they passed this thing which changed the ratios of state to local financing in schools and it changed the financing for libraries [Laughter] and streets and highways and it changed the way county governments and city governments got and spent their money And it changed it forever

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY I mean they are still modifying to fix the residue the echoes of Proposition 13 But for a couple of years until the surplus was gone [Laughter] everybody was off the hook What did happen was the state entered into a much more intimate relationship with the local schools it changed the way the schools were financed it changed who had a say in how the schools were operated because he who pays the fiddler calls the tune and that happens at government

levels too. So we were a long time realizing the consequences of Proposition 13. And Jarvis and Gann went off to run tax reform all over the world. And other states did the same thing [Laughter] mostly to their regret as they learned that there is no magic potion, there is no bag of money any place, there never is. There is always a finite amount of money in government. Not to say that some of it isn't squandered and spent foolishly and allocated in a silly fashion, but with something like Prop 13 put it in the constitution, which means it can only be changed by a vote of the people, you've locked yourself in, just like the lunacy of locking ourselves into term limits.

And it has the same long term effects, because you set something up that can't be changed except by another vote of the people, and it's very hard to do that. It's very easy to demagogue the issue of both term limits and property taxes. But now you have the situation where people have lived in their house since the 1940s or fifties, or maybe they bought their house in the early seventies, and they are paying a very, very small property tax based on the valuation of the purchase price at that time, and next door to them is a guy who bought the house, an identical house a year later, he is paying six or seven or ten times as much property tax. There is no equity there. It hurts young people starting out, and it hurts people trying to buy houses, and blah blah blah. So it was not the panacea, wonder solution.

WOLLENBERG: One of the ironies of course is, the people favoring Prop 13 were conservatives, and yet the effect was to reduce the power of local government.

CONNELLY: Absolutely.

WOLLENBERG: It gives the state a lot more centralized power.

CONNELLY That was the great irony of Proposition 13. You created bigger and bigger government. And you gave them the power of the purse, too.

WOLLENBERG Yes.

CONNELLY It was really dumb. [Laughter] It was really dumb.

WOLLENBERG I guess, though, the question, as a staff member of an important legislative committee, is why didn't the legislature do something before? Why didn't the legislature provide a more rational way of dealing with the problem, since they knew that the public was concerned about this?

CONNELLY Well, I don't know the whole answer to that, but there are several parts of the answer that I know. First of all, the thing passed in June of 1978. It was in the latter part of the session, the state budget is in its final hours, final machinations, it must be passed by the 30th of June. The legislature was in an end-of-session frame of mind, and it's not the time when you normally introduce big new bills. I think it probably would have been difficult to find someone who had the stature and the authority to take the leadership in an issue like this, because you had these growing surpluses, and the legislators were licking their chops about how they were going to spend these huge amounts of money. They don't want to give it away to anybody else. And they knew everybody knew that if you wrote legislation to do this, you would look like you were confronting and confounding the will of the people, because Jarvis and Gann had managed to convince the public that they were the good guys, you know, and so nobody wanted to be on the side of the devils. And it is always possible that they would have shot at the bird and missed. They might have passed legislation that was

WOLLENBERG Even worse

CONNELLY Even worse And also it was if they were going to do that they had to have done it in the previous December or so because it was on the ballot You can't take it off the ballot you just have to you have to defeat it And so you had to have had in place a campaign to sway people from this notion that they were going to get something for free and that they were paying something that was unfair Nobody saw it coming soon enough The big surpluses didn't begin to appear until late that spring The state doesn't know how much money it is going to get until it gets into the late spring when they see property tax and income tax receipts

WOLLENBERG It's the May revise

CONNELLY The May revision of the budget yes So it just came like a tidal wave And it was so clear that the gray heads of the state were united now on this issue and they you know it was God and motherhood and it was dangerous to get in front of that juggernaut So they didn't see it coming

WOLLENBERG And obviously Governor Brown didn't

CONNELLY No

WOLLENBERG He didn't show leadership?

CONNELLY No he became a born again tax cutter after it passed

WOLLENBERG Yes He was opposed to it I guess

CONNELLY Yes he was opposed to it But he wasn't effectively opposed to it because he wasn't a very effective guy I mean everybody knew Governor Moonbeam by this time Well they didn't know it by this time It was later that they realized that But because he won big

WOLLENBERG He won reelection

CONNELLY He won a second term that year and everybody thought he was just hunky chunky But there was no strong leadership I think it was one of those periods that unfortunately occurred for instance as did the energy bill in 1996 when there was a hiatus in strong leadership and there wasn't anybody around there weren't any grownups around to say Wait a minute there's a better way to handle this And as of course in the future there will be even fewer people with stature and leadership because they won't be around long enough to gain any stature or leadership

WOLLENBERG Because of term limits

CONNELLY Because of term limits of course

WOLLENBERG Well speaking of Jerry Brown and the Jerry Brown administration it was about at this time that you joined that administration went over to the executive branch and became the deputy director of the California Department of Forestry under your friend Dave Pesonen

CONNELLY Pesonen yes Well Dave and I went to school together we had known each other since we were kids When we were in our late teens we both worked together in the Forest Service and we went to school together at Cal So we were long term friends He came to Sacramento he had gone to law school after graduating in forestry at Cal and he graduated from Boalt He was a practicing attorney His firm [Laughter] represented James Jones of Jonestown So he had just come through a terrible traumatic experience dealing with the consequences of that tragedy So Brown appointed him to the Department of Forestry in '78

WOLLENBERG He already had established a reputation as a very effective environmentalist

CONNELLY That s true He was very effective in the anti nuclear movement He had not single handedly but he had been a material part of the efforts in the late sixties early seventies When was Bodega Bay?

WOLLENBERG The early sixties And that was preventing PG&E from building a nuclear plant at Bodega Bay

CONNELLY Within about 1 800 feet of a major fault Then in the early seventies he was very active in Proposition 13 which was very effective in creating a climate in which nuclear power plants were not built after that at all So he had a statewide reputation as a conservationist and Huey

WOLLENBERG Huey Johnson?

CONNELLY Huey Johnson who was the resources secretary knew David as did Claire Dietrich who was later the resources secretary It was a cadre of people who were similar in their thoughts David was always a flaming liberal and he was ready to move into government As many attorneys I think like to move into that with the view maybe of becoming a judge As a matter of fact he became a judge

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY But he came to Sacramento and he recognized very shortly that it would be well to have somebody as his exempt deputy Again I was not a civil service guy but somebody who would cover his back

WOLLENBERG By exempt you mean somebody who was hired and fired at the pleasure of the director ?

CONNELLY At the pleasure of the governor or director

WOLLENBERG Rather than

CONNELLY Rather than the civil service Because it became apparent very quickly to David that the world of Sacramento bureaucracy is a world unto itself and it's cultured unto itself and it has a hierarchy and it listens to an ethic and hears a very different drummer than people who are outside of this And the Department of Forestry was one of the oldest departments in state government in continuous operation It is a paramilitary organization Although it was called the Department of Forestry then it is now the Department of Forestry and Fire Control But at that point 93 percent of the budget was devoted to the fire mission and very small emphasis on forestry which is what David's interest was in the timber harvest plans and reforming the process by which timber harvest plans are promulgated and formulated He was working with then a less than enthusiastic Board of Forestry that needed to be prodded in the direction of doing some preservation around logging operations

WOLLENBERG How does that division of power work because there's a Board of Forestry and then there's a department

CONNELLY Well the Board of Forestry is a policy setting body They are appointees of the governor It's their job to establish policy which is then the duty of the director to carry out There are a great many members of the logging community [Laughter] on the Board of Forestry so it was a little bit like having a whole bunch of woodchucks watching the woodchuck farm There was a long tradition of this in California David and I when we were young men working in the forest service over in the Mendocino and Six Rivers National Forest had seen the effects of absolutely devastating forestry practices on federal lands

and even worse on private lands out there where not only did they clear cut it but the tractors caused so much erosion that you killed the land for centuries to come when simple amelioration practices could have been taken that would have made a big difference So he wasn't battling the Board of Forestry because it was changing Brown was making appointments to it and they were slowly coming into the late 19th century but they hadn't quite gotten there yet

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY They still thought they were building railroads over the Sierra or something like that and his quarrel was also with the personnel We had a big organization There were 2 500 3 000 full time employees in five regions twenty two or twenty three ranger districts all over the state with a very complex convoluted relationship with local governments In some cases the local governments contracted with the Department of Forestry to provide rural fire protection In other cases the department contracted with some counties to do the work that the department would have the responsibility for on private lands These contracts were very old some of them went back to the 1920s They were overgrown with moss backed ideas stuff from another era We were in a huge growth spurt here in California and people were moving into what the department then and still calls the interphase the urban rural interphase building houses in the boondocks which need [Laughter] fire protection

WOLLENBERG Right

CONNELLY And especially if they're built at the end of cul de sacs on single lane roads which have no turn outs on them which we are still doing in California Then they got to the end of this road and they built a house and they put a shake

roof on it. And then they were surprised as hell when the thing burned down. So we were the state was then in the process and I'm not sure that it's really ever gotten out of it of providing low cost fire protection to developers and speculative builders to build houses in places where they had no business building a house and where it became very very costly to fight fire because you could not abandon the houses. So instead of fighting a forest fire by finding a ridge line or a tree line or a highway or a river or some natural barrier and taking your stand and putting the fire down you used your resources to park a fire truck or two or three and two or three crews in front of every house in the area.

And so you loose herded the fire that was the term they used you loosed herded a fire by which you meant it was as though you were moving cattle through trees and you took them around. So you took the fire *around* the houses. But the fire continued to burn. So it is not only very costly in resources to fight fire that way but it also means that the fires get bigger. Because you're not fighting the fire.

WOLLENBERG: You're not fighting the fire you're protecting individual homes.

CONNELLY: And you're becoming more and more dependant on high tech activities which mostly consist of using aircraft helicopters and fixed wing aircraft. And they were then and are now very [Laughter] expensive to operate for hours huge costs. At one point the department had their own aircraft and contract aircraft. We might have 120-130 aircraft. We were running the 8th air force out of the Department of Forestry headquarters on the 16th floor of the resources building and without a real sensible long term plan. We had no influence on

the insurance industry to say Look why don t you guys start doing some real time pricing or cost pricing on providing rural home insurance and protection commensurate with the actual costs And reimburse either by reducing the number of houses built in the wild or else generate some revenues which we could use to fight the fires out there

That was anathema nobody wanted to talk about that We had a bunch of all male firefighters not a woman to be seen anyplace no women in the department It was looking like an elephants graveyard there up in the 16th floor We had all these superannuated old rangers with their bellies hanging over their belt running the personnel department and the accounting department and the accounts payable department They didn t know anything about it But this is where they went to retire and to sit out their last year

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY And so as a consequence it was David s intention and certainly mine to bring women and to bring people from other departments So we changed some fairly antediluvian practices and operations state operations and changed the firefighting mission and we brought women into the firefighting mission We did that over the kicking screaming struggling overweight bodies of an awful lot of firefighters who weren t about to have any women They still resist They still resist having women in the fire force And after the tragic loss of those two young women in Washington last week they ll say They shouldn t have been there in the first place They re not strong enough Baloney Somebody misread the fire that s what happened to those young women

WOLLENBERG Yes What were your specific roles?

CONNELLY Well I have a talent for walking into it [Laughter] I joined the department in 1978 and it was the beginning of the labor union movement in California state government I believe it was 1980 was the first MOUs the first Memorandum of Understanding with agency personnel that would be incorporated into a series of giant labor contracts We had an organization an old organization called CDFEA California Department of Forestry Employees Association and they had been in effect a union for twenty years It was my role to sit down with management at the Department of Forestry and design a position to take to negotiations with the representatives of the union to design a fair and equitable MOU establishing conditions of employment hours of employment pay scales employee pay ratings and equipment expenditures and all this kind of stuff I mean it was like the army phase out after the Second World War

The first thing I did was pull our management team together many of whom were field rangers and who I d already antagonized by suggesting that we were using too much aircraft and fighting fires on lands that weren t worth anything We were spending \$11 000 an hour dropping chemicals from high priced airplanes when we could let the damn thing burn and nothing would be lost And that was anathema too We fight all the fires It was like dealing with the Christian knights in the medieval period I mean they would not hear of any variation The first thing they did was they sat down and they laughed and they said Well let s just give them the store because if we give it to the employees we ll get it too And I couldn t I mean I thought I was pretty sophisticated but that really knocked me off my chair

I got up on my feet and I told them that wasn't the way we were going to do it and if I heard any more talk like that I was going to personally see to it they were fired. These were public funds and it was all the money we were going to get. We didn't want to spend it all for frivolous baloney. I mean we were fair to the employees and they had more than fair treatment out of the MOU fund. It was also one of the thirteen that was only involved in one department. Many of these MOUs were for classes of employees were found in multiple departments but this was all firefighters. So I was really a bad guy for a long time. We had an awful time with it. It took months of negotiations.

WOLLENBERG Was there a separate MOU for the firefighters versus the other personnel?

CONNELLY No everybody in the department was covered by the same MOU.

WOLLENBERG But I guess the great majority of the people in the department was in fire fighting.

CONNELLY Almost everybody was in the fire mission. There weren't abuses but they had just been left alone for too long. There were too many regions there were too many ranger districts there were too many fire stations. There were fire stations [Laughter] that hadn't gone to a fire in years. We had fire stations in a rainforest for Christ's sake. The equipment was rusting.

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY It was those kinds of reforms that were very difficult to make. At the same time we were finding that we wanted to bring women and we wanted to bring people of color into fire fighting. In the summertime this population would burgeon up to 3 000 or 4 000 3 500 4 000 people. And you add the prison inmates we had the better part of an infantry division of people in the field.

being supplied buying groceries and supplies locally You know it's not unknown and it has happened that grocers have set fires in an area where there was a little slow summer because they knew that the CDF or the Forest Service would come in and set up a big feeding station All these kinds of things happened and all can be avoided with some skill

But we needed women we needed Hispanics we needed black people in the thing right away because the governor wanted to do that Huey wanted to do that David wanted to do that [Laughter] but the local folks didn't want to do that They said Well we don't have any applicants [Laughter] Well you don't have any applicants because you don't tell them that there's a job! I mean it was just really ridiculous So we had a great deal of difficulty in overcoming the resistance to having women in the first place

So then the next thing arose was All Mexicans are short guys and they're not very strong and black guys all live in urban ghettos and they don't know anything about walking in the woods and wearing boots I said Well great Why don't we establish a set of standards and everybody has to meet the standards They said Right on! Because they figured none of these guys would meet the standards They weren't all this bad but there was a lot of those attitudes Well of course it was a two edged sword and it came back and bit them right on the fanny because *they* had to meet these standards And many of these guys have not walked up a sidehill with a hose pack on their back for a good many years And there was a lot of huffing and puffing and a lot of early retirements and retirements for disability and all this kind of stuff Nobody went to fifty five Plus they were in the safety retirement system in

the Department of Forestry Safety retirement is different than the retirement system for other state employees That means that you could go out five years before anybody else could with a very very handsome pension And if you got a disability you got some more goodies In fact you got a year of payment without paying any taxes on it I mean it was wonderful Plus there was in the statutes a presumption that if you were hurt or injured or died as a fireman that it was presumed that it was causes that the department was responsible for I mean it was outrageous

We waded through that and we set up standards Then the union came in and said Well it s not fair to make people who have had the senior experience to take the same thing that a young person has to take and we don t think that you can prove that these tests actually test the actual field conditions So we hired consultants who came in and designed step tests and lifting tests and walking tests and climbing tests We spent a fortune on it Then we said We ll sweeten it If you guys will start meeting these things get your weight down Many of them were overweight many of them had high blood pressure many of them had remedial remediable? Probably the wrong word You could do something about many of their problems

We said We ll spring for free attendance at a health club I will pay you we ll pay bonuses for loss of weight Because we were paying these workers comp claims That s an out of pocket cost So somebody keels over has a heart attack it costs I mean not only is there a personal tragic loss but it costs a lot of money to send somebody out on disability and that is out of your budget I mean that s just a sunk cost that you can t recover and it s money

that you can't use for something else. So we tried to get people to get their weight under control and change their dietary habits and exercise and to some extent we were successful.

But we still weren't getting very many women and minorities. They were beginning to trickle in. A lot of our help came from the inmate camps. And some of that was very good. We got blacks and we got Hispanic guys out of that. But we weren't getting women. I don't even know if women were in any of these camps. There's thirty or thirty-five camps all over the state. We got a couple of women who were weight lifters. And I didn't put them up to it either. They honestly, they wanted to go to. And they came in and they just walked through these tests. I mean it was ridiculous. They were so much stronger. You know, the contention was the old guys would say, 'Well, if I fall down and get hurt in a fire, these women aren't strong enough to carry me out.' Any one of these women could carry three of them out. [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY But it was a slow process. The fire mission is big and we had bad years in the late seventies and the early eighties. We had terrible fires in 1980 and '81, huge losses, lots of houses burned down. So there was a lot of focus on it. And we, David and I, in fairness, exacerbated that because if there was a lot of rain in the winter before we'd say, 'The rain came, the grasses are high, bad fire season, we've got to have extra money.' If it had been no rain, we'd say, 'No rain, the grasses are high, they're very dry, we've got to have extra money.'

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY [Laughter] We did sort of manipulate public opinion.

[End of Tape 5 Side B]

[Begin Tape 6 Side A]

WOLLENBERG We were discussing the challenges of getting women and people of color into the department and the changing of what you might call the whole culture of the department

CONNELLY They did resist having women. It wasn't so much racist. They were sexist. They just didn't think that women belonged on the fire line and they had never been on the fire line and as far as they were concerned they never were going to be on the fire line. A lot of resistance. But we were getting a lot of pressure from the other end to develop a rainbow and to get folks out there who were more representative of the people across the state.

We had a big aircraft agency in the department we had an aircraft department and this guy came in and told me that he had been down at Davis Monthan Air Force Base in Arizona where we used to go for spare parts (The navy had given the Department of Forestry aircraft in the early seventies and we always had access to surplus aircraft parts) So he was down at Davis Monthan and he had spotted twenty UH 1F Huey helicopters sitting down there. He said I checked on it they're all executive ships so they weren't in Vietnam they didn't get all shot up and they're not all rusty and they're going to Argentina. And I said Well the hell with that. So at that time Vern Orr was the secretary of the air force secretary of the air force in Washington.

WOLLENBERG And before that he'd been here in Sacramento under Reagan.

CONNELLY He'd been the director of finance. So I didn't know him well but he knew who I was and I called him up. I said You know you've got these UH1 F

helicopters and they're sitting down there at Davis Monthan they're going to go to Argentina and we could use them in California. And you know you're a Californian, blah, blah, blah. So he said, 'Well, let me call you back.' He checked it out and he said, 'Yes, you know, the state department arranged that. They're going down there to chase pot growers or some goddamned thing.' I said, 'Well, look, can't you do anything for us?'

And he called me back in a couple of days and he says, 'You can have them.' So we had twenty helicopters. So we were foolish. We were young and we were green and we announced that we had these helicopters. And the first thing I heard from was the Helicopter Protective Association in California which organization represented the people from whom we had been leasing summertime helicopters. They didn't think we ought to have any of our own because if we had our own we might not lease theirs. And they went to the legislature, they did everything to stop us. Well, I had been there too, so we were able to head them off at the pass a little bit. They made a lot of really silly mistakes and they really shot themselves in the foot. But they made it hot for us.

So we, the department hired twenty low boy trucks, these things that they move tractors on, twenty of them. We had them drive, not in convoy, by different routes to Davis Monthan Air Force Base. We arrived at 8:00 in the morning. I wasn't there but our guy was there and we had the paperwork for these twenty helicopters. They were all folded up, the rotors were all folded back on them. And the guy at the gate said, 'What the hell? I can't give you twenty helicopters!' So after two hours of wrangling they said, 'Well, I guess

they're yours. So we loaded them on to these low boys and by different routes they came back in to California and we hid them in National Guard armories all over the state. Because we knew that if the association found out that they were here that they'd get an injunction. We needed money to rehab. They cost three or four hundred thousand dollars apiece to re-engine and radios and all this stuff and that was still in the house. I knew that we would put that at risk if we raised an issue. So we didn't let them know and we hid them. They didn't know they were here.

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY And we got the money and we rehabbed them. As soon as we rehabbed them they circulated a rumor that they were all shot up Vietnam era helicopters and they were death traps and anybody that got in one of these things was sure to die in a terrible crash. They're still flying today. I saw one flying this summer. They have had a perfect record. Never lost one. knock on wood.

But then we went to Huey Johnson and we said Huey we've got these nifty helicopters. He said You know what he said It smacks of Vietnam and militarism and I don't like it. I said Jesus I mean you know we got in a certain amount of trouble [Laughter] to get these things here. He said I don't like it.

WOLLENBERG He was secretary of resources.

CONNELLY He was the secretary of resources so he was David's boss. This was the era of B. T. Collins. He was the legislative liaison and then he was the chief of staff for Jerry Brown. Jerry Brown recognized that the California Conservation Corps was dying. It was a moribund organization. It was incompetently led. It

was a PR disaster so he put B T Collins in charge of it Well I knew B T Collins real well because he used to be the legislative liaison person over in the for the assembly So I went and I said B T baby we have got a wonderful opportunity I think we got eight or nine helicopters up that season And Let s do this Let s put the CCC kids because you have lots of women and minorities in your crew and we ll make hotshot crews out of them and we ll sew them into really nifty jumpsuits with lots of colored patches and pretty colored helmets which we ll paint and we ll write CCC and CDF on the sides of the helmet And he said Yes swinging let s do that! So he had the governor s ear

The governor told Huey Johnson Well these helicopters aren t that militaristic and we re going to paint them CDF colors So we had these kids all fixed up in their uniforms And we had long since identified every member of both houses who had a district where there was a potential for a big fire and we had had a Nomex jacket made with that member s name assemblyman or senator something across the back and a CDF white helmet with his name on the side of it and our name on the other side of it And these were kept at the rangers station When we ever had a big fire what we d do is we d wait until the second day we d wait until we had a project fire because a little fire didn t count had to have a project fire we d call the member We d ask if he could meet us near the fire We always did it in the parking lot of a grocery store because I mean we could have gone to the airport [Laughter] That s why they build airports but you could always get the cameras the television cameras to come out to the grocery store And if we couldn t get a camera team to the fire

first we had our own camera team out there and they photographed the guy getting out of the helicopter

So we had a *lot* of friends in both houses I mean that was good there was no downside to that P R They had a good time with that thing So they were very supportive of us when we came and asked for more money for this and that and the other thing So we decided we would do a hoop de do because we were going to need some more money for the renovations on the helicopters and these hotshot crews are very costly I mean there s equipment there s training there s quarters food equipment housing all kinds of stuff So I said I m going to bring a helicopter and park it down here in front of the library and courts building

WOLLENBERG Here in Sacramento

CONNELLY And we called the chief of police in Sacramento and he said Over my dead body you re going to fly a helicopter down Capitol Avenue So I went to the Leg Counsel and they said Well he may not like it [Laughter] but he can t do anything about it because that s state property So I called him and I said Look I know you don t like it we re going to be really careful we ll block off the intersection and he finally cooperated He was really mad I had to buy him lunch to get out of that one

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY And the old Sutter Club across the street here was being renovated and they had scaffolding all around it We went over and I saw the guy in charge and I said Yes we re going to fly a UH1 F a big helicopter Do you want to strap that down? No no we know what we re doing Well as it turns out we had

the air full of flying scaffolding. But we brought it down Capitol Avenue, we broke windows in almost every building from 555 Capitol Towers all the way down there. It was spectacular. And we had the members, they were in a budget session, that's why we did it. And we had every television camera and all the trucks out there and we had all the jackets for everybody with their name on the back of it. Oh, what a P R production.

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY So we got that program well launched and it worked. It helped. The department didn't like the CCC crews, they said they were urban kids, they were all junkies and dropouts and long haired freaks and all this kind of stuff so they got a chance to see that they weren't as bad as they thought they were. The crews did excellent work. And some people got killed too. You almost have to have a casualty. And we had people injured. They didn't become part of Forestry's culture but they began to break down the barriers. So that was our big success, the MOU, which was not a bad MOU with the labor union and getting the helicopters and the aircraft.

WOLLENBERG I guess part of your job was to handle the department's legislative relations and you must have had some interesting times with different legislators.

CONNELLY Well, we did. We were flying, as I told you earlier, the navy had given us twenty five or thirty S2As, tracker, anti submarine, carrier based aircraft and we had been using them for ten years in the fire mission.

WOLLENBERG They were probably 1950s origin.

CONNELLY They were 1950s technology, they were old but some of them are still flying, they have been re-engined but they are still flying, which is pretty damn good.

usage on an airplane that was built in 1950. It became clear that fixed wing aircraft was not the solution. It would be better to go for bigger helicopters because you can pinpoint where you're dropping the water and use these buckets. Also, another big initiative of David's was the prescription burning program where in the winter time when the fuel around the state was wet and less likely to get away from you, you could use a helicopter to selectively burn by a prescription involving temperature and pressure and all that kind of stuff and you could modify a watershed. The Forest Service had been doing it for several years. It wasn't new, but it was new to the state and it was very effective. There was a P.R. problem with that too [Laughter] what they were dropping was napalm.

WOLLENBERG: Oops.

CONNELLY: So we called it Alumigel and gasoline, which is what napalm is [Laughter]. So no one ever caught on, none of the reporters had ever been to Vietnam so they had never seen Alumigel on the side of the canisters or whatever.

So we had that program pretty well in place. But we were looking for new aircraft and lo and behold, the wholly owned subsidiary of the Canadian government called the Canadair Corporation had just the thing or so they thought. It was called The Super Scooper. It's a twin engine airplane with radial engines circa 1938 that they had been trying to peddle for years. They were used in firefighting missions in Canada where there is a lot of free standing water, a lot of lakes. These aircraft could land and taxi at high speed, load water through a scoop in the bottom of it and then take off and go drop it on the fire.

WOLLENBERG They d land right in the lake and scoop the water up and take right off?

CONNELLY They d land and scoop water without stopping It was an idea that was really one of the great ideas of 1944 but it wasn't [Laughter] a great idea in 1980 They were very expensive airplanes they were costly to operate they were costly to maintain they had a lot of problems And we the department had seen them for several years and we had a pretty good read on them and they just were not they weren't our solution Enter pro tem Dave Roberti of the state senate

WOLLENBERG State senate president pro tem?

CONNELLY President pro tem yes He introduced a bill under which we would have bought four of these beasts these Super Scooper CL 215s you never forget some of this stuff Super Scooper aircraft courtesy of Canadair Corporation and we were to pay something like \$7 million apiece so we were talking about a \$28 million appropriation It was the last \$28 million we were going to see for aircraft replacement for a long time and we were buying the wrong equipment It was just a wrongheaded thing to do It didn't make any sense So we resisted it we were in the budget process and it was in the spring of the year it was in April or May coming on to the fire season The lobbyists who were representing Canadair were whooping it up The fire season is coming the department doesn't want to put out fires they want your house to burn your children I mean it is really scurrilous crap but it is the kind of stuff that is very hard to oppose

So we had a budget issue The senator arranged to have this appropriation placed in our budget too Well now it gets dangerous because now you re

talking taking maybe \$28 million out of your budget and buying something that you didn't want in the first place

WOLLENBERG Right taking that money away from something else

CONNELLY Yes Plus you were going to be maintaining them forever you know? You have got to look ahead in this kind of stuff So we were not very effectively opposing this I mean the pro tem was going to have his way no question of that And Willie was out of power at this point [laughter] so I couldn't go to him

So I was out at lunch one day walking on K Street and I ran into a reporter a friend of mine who was a reporter for the *Sacramento Bee* And the *Bee* at that time owned the *Anchorage Times* He said Hey you know this Super Scooper thing is really heating up I said How so? He said Well they've indicted two members of the Alaska state legislature over a scandal involving these CL 215s where somebody tried to talk them into putting them into a budget up there just the other day and somebody blew the whistle on them and as it turned out somebody went to jail I mean it was very serious it was a straight out bribery case So I thought Oh man But I had known Dave Roberti for a long time he was a member long before I showed up in Sacramento in the assembly and now he was the pro tem of the senate

So I went over I called his office I saw David Pesonen I saw the director and I said This is what the situation is And he agreed that we needed to warn him it was the right and decent thing to do but I got elected to be the messenger So I went over and made an appointment and saw him that afternoon and saw him in his office I said I have a confidential matter it's

important and it's important to you. I was shown into his office and he sat behind his desk and hunched all down the dead frog approach we used to call it or people who knew him called it. And he was just scared and glassy eyed.

I went through the story as I had gotten it from the reporter there had been an indictment and what circumstances and what details I had of this thing. He was silent for a while and then all of a sudden he came to his feet and it was just the two of us in the room and he said I am not a crook. Shades of Richard Nixon. [Laughter] I am not a crook. And he starts to walk rapidly around the office walking over the top of the furniture on the cushions of the sofa. I am not a crook. I didn't. This is all this is outrageous! And I'm sitting there watching this man just behaving in an absolutely incredibly

So he finally went back and he sat down and he calmed down and he looked at me and said Thank you very much. Thank you very much. And I thought Oh boy I'm the messenger I'm going to get shot. So I left left him and went back and I told David. I told the director David Pesonen what happened and he said Well you know we did what we could and I hope we don't suffer the consequences in our budget or through the governor's office or whatever. So we sweated it out through the afternoon.

The next morning I arrived at the office a little before 9:00 and I found an envelope stuffed under the door somebody had come after hours and it was addressed to me and it had Dave Robert's letterhead on it it was from Dave Senator Robert. [Laughter] we were not on a first name basis then or ever after. And he said Thank you very much Mr. Connelly for bringing to my

attention this matter the occasion of the irregularities in Alaska and said My bill has nothing to do with anything like that and my interest in the CL 215 and the Canadair Corporation is purely in the interest of formulating successful practices blah blah blah blah blah And in effect he said I ve looked at this matter and because of the nature of the charges in Alaska I ve decided that our interest would be best served if we withdrew the bill and we ll withdraw the amendment to your budget So we figured we were off the hook And that afternoon we had a budget hearing and I went over there and although Roberti as a pro tem was not on the subcommittee of the Senate Finance Committee he was present I walked in and I thought This does not look like it s going to be a good afternoon

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY I walked in and there was you know Senator Roberti the pro tem of senate is always an august figure you know Caesar Augustus didn t shake hands with the praetorian guard either He came down and he shook my hand How are you? And people are looking at us What in the heck is going on here? And our budget was restored to its previous condition and the bill was dropped But I don t think he ever did anything on it again but it didn t go away I mean year after year they d be back with an effort to sell us the CL 215

WOLLENBERG Did the department ever end up buying?

CONNELLY Never We never bought one We ve had innumerable offers of free use of the thing And they were always a disaster they re just old technology and it wasn t what you needed and there aren t very many lakes that would lend

themselves without picking up a jet ski driver [Laughter] while you were doing it

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY It made no sense for California and we had no business with them

WOLLENBERG So you had been part of the Jerry Brown administration do you have any sense of the achievements or lack of achievements of that administration not only in CDF?

CONNELLY Well hindsight is always 20/20 and you look back you can always see where the mistakes were made But it was during this period that the great malathion issue arose down in the South Bay it was in the San Jose area There was an infestation of a fruit fly that posed and still poses a serious threat to an important agricultural commodity Brown had ordered that the area in the Santa Clara Valley be sprayed with malathion And this was when B T Collins went down and drank a glass of malathion Jesus I couldn't believe that one This is a guy who had been in Vietnam and lost an arm and a leg to a hand grenade and who had been seriously wounded anyhow But it didn't kill him I was with him Forestry was doing some of the spraying [Laughter] so we were involved in this thing a little bit

As a matter of fact I flew a couple of people down in a three plane formation from Sacramento with the governor in one of the planes Forestry planes It was a case where the public relations head was leading the effort and it clearly was not well thought out We didn't have the scientific background we didn't have the scientific community on the board we didn't have somebody from the university or better from the industry maybe one of

their hired scientists to tell us. You know, this is the only thing to do, and it's not a danger to the public. None of this front stuff. It's so important to front these events. If you're going to go public, it's like going into the courtroom as an attorney. You've got to know the answer to the question before you ask it. And I think Brown was a hip shooter. You know, he'd come up with a good idea, and he'd run with it for a little while, and then he'd lose interest. And he didn't have the people around him who could do the good quality staff work, or maybe he had them and he didn't pay any attention to him. It was hard to say. But he was perceived as being somebody who was not thoughtful.

You know, governors in California, all of them want to be president, have to show the public a sort of a mature, capable, thoughtful, reflective side. And he had difficulty in doing that. Fairly or unfairly, he got tagged with the Governor Moonbeam. He had people on his staff, you know. Rusty Schweiker was on his staff, one of the earliest astronauts, you know, a good guy. I mean, a very amusing guy, and full of wonderful stories. I mean, he flew around the moon! I mean, this guy could tell stories. But Brown didn't have a presentation system, you know, that's what Reagan had. Reagan had people around him who were very judicial, and who wore three piece suits and vests, and always seemed to be there, the presence, the calming, mature, thoughtful, long term, and which is what a successful presidential candidate has got to have. And Jerry didn't have it.

WOLLENBERG: How about his relationships with the legislature?

CONNELLY: Well, as long as he had B. T. Collins running interference for him, he was batting a thousand, because B. T. was a wonderful raconteur, and was an

enormously amusing man. He would go to anybody's fund raiser. Republican Democrat. He was a Republican as a matter of fact, but he'd go to anybody's fund raiser and act as the master of ceremonies, and the lobbyists would pay buy the tickets to hear B. T. Collins! He was the greatest draw, so everybody in the legislature loved Jerry's B. T. Collins. He was less successful when B. T. went off to run the CCC.

And I think that Brown just wasn't paying enough attention. You know, he had been the secretary of state, and the secretary of state is an office without any duties. All you do is write press releases. I mean, he was responsible for getting the Fair Political Practices Act on the books, and you have to give him that, and it was the right thing. But I don't think he had the experience, and I don't think he had the bottom. He didn't have enough time and service. People need to spend some time. Willie spent time learning his craft.

WOLLENBERG: Making mistakes and learning from them.

CONNELLY: Making mistakes and learning his craft. I mean, Willie was elected in '64, and he wasn't the speaker until 1980. I mean, that is a long time. And he had a long learning opportunity, and he was very quick on a learning curve. Jerry Brown had had some time as a secretary of state. But at that level, you know, the governor, and that, you need to have people who know how to do something, and have done something, not just, I'm going to, they have to have done something, or they should have done something. You know, Reagan is an exception to that. I mean, he walks out of the Movie Actors' Union and waltzes in here on the basis of the *Tales of Wells Fargo* or something, the cowboy movie thing. But the public is funny.

But I think today more and more you need to have some substance. You need to have some substantial accomplishments because people are beginning maybe beginning to realize. Oh they elected George Bush! [Laughter] Maybe there are not enough of them you know. But you need to have people who know something about what they're doing and have done something somewhere so that you can have some confidence that they will be able to handle it. I mean this energy crisis is an example. There wasn't anybody there to give some guidance and so in 1996 they did some really foolish things that if they had been thinking ahead a little bit they probably could have avoided. And someone who had been through those kind of experiences and probably any corporation that has had those kind of experiences. You know if you're borrowing money in the marketplace or selling stocks or doing IPOs they have very similar experiences and they've learned how to handle it. And they also learn the pitfalls.

WOLLENBERG: Also I guess in your whole career this is the one time you're really in a high position in the executive branch of government.

CONNELLY: Yes yes yes.

WOLLENBERG: Do you have any feelings about the difference?

CONNELLY: Well I'll tell you one of the things that attracted me about it aside from that I was ready to get out of the legislature for a while was I was a firefighter once when I was a young man and so I knew something about it and I was excited about that. I was a pilot and I was interested in aviation and I got both feet into that. But the difference between an agency of government and the legislature is the legislature doesn't really have any discernable product. I

mean they write bills. But an agency like Forestry does something. I mean so many acres don't burn or so many acres of fire are controlled and so many areas are logged et cetera. So it was an agency that had a fairly substantive specified mission and it was doing it. When I went into the field and I started meeting the junior people the very early professional entry levels for young men almost exclusively men there were hardly any women at all in the agency.

WOLLENBERG They were probably out in the field not in the office in Sacramento.

CONNELLY They weren't in the office or in Sacramento. Sacramento was geriatric firemen. But the people in the field were buying computers on their own out of their own pocket and they were beginning to realize that in order to effectively manage a fire hazard mission the size of California's you need computers. There is no bigger fire department in the world today and there never has been it is an enormous undertaking. We spend hundreds of millions of dollars of state and federal monies in fire control in California and it matters people die if you do it wrong.

These people were beginning to understand and had for some time understood that the department's idea of writing fire certificates on the back of an envelope and carrying it into the office in September when they got around to it wasn't going to do it. They needed to know how to manage their resources how to move resources how to dispatch how to modify and upgrade radio systems how to do fire weather forecasting how to do infrared photography from aircraft. You can't see a fire it's all smoky. By definition you can't see where the perimeter is you can't see what it's doing until you use

infrared. In its infancy. And these people were some of the best and the brightest people I have ever encountered any place.

Now their thinking in terms of women and minorities [Laughter] was pretty much in the eleventh century. But they knew their job, they were good professionals, and they were hard working guys, and they were smart. And they realized that it *had* to change. The old way of waiting until the bell rang and leaping into your truck and going to the fire, it wasn't making it. It was really a great, it was a treat to meet these people.

WOLLENBERG: What about, I know this was a small area of the department at that time, but what about the forestry practices and logging, did you make any headway on this?

CONNELLY: I didn't have much of a role in that, because I don't have the technical background. David is a forester by training before he was an attorney, and he made significant modifications in the Forest Practices Act. It was a reform that was clearly needed. I mean, it was a program that had not been looked at for a long time. But it was such a small part of the department's endeavor that it didn't have a lasting effect. And some of the prescription burning programs, very much of interest, because it was a way to modify watersheds, it made sense, and it was cheap and effective. A couple of fires got away from us and we had a lot of bad publicity, that always happens, it happened this year. But he really made an effort to bring women in, to modernize the department's practices, to reorganize into fewer regions and consolidate, and we had a staff that was better organized, trained, healthier. They didn't like it.

But they were healthier [Laughter] I used to say Follow me up the stairs I walked up sixteen flights of stairs every morning to get to my office and everybody in the department knew I did they used to kid me about it
OK guys let s see who s ready at fire line Line up I ll lead you up

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY Count cadence some of that worked

[End of Tape Six Side A]

[End of Interview]

[Session 3 July 26 2001]

[Begin Tape 7 Side A]

WOLLENBERG Thursday July 26 and this is a continuation of the interview with Bob Connelly Bob last time we talked about your role in the California Department of Forestry When Jerry Brown left office your tenure in the CDF ended

CONNELLY That s right I was a pleasure appointee of the governor as was my boss Dave Pesonen Dave went on to become a superior court judge in Contra Costa County and I reapplied back in the legislature I talked to Willie Brown who was by that time speaker and I hadn t gotten anything definitive out of him So I went to Al Alquist who was the Senate Finance Committee chairman who I had maintained contact with because of his interest in the fire mission and I had a job with him In fact I was walking across the street from the Department of Forestry to the Capitol when I ran into Steve Thompson who was by then the chief of staff for Willie in the first year of his speakership He said Well Brown wants you to come back to work and he said I was supposed to tell you and I forgot to tell you last week

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY And I said Thanks a lot Steve So I ended up back on Brown's staff and we moved into the restored Capitol in the same wing of the building that we had been in when we were in Ways and Means but now the building had been extensively rebuilt We were on the third floor opposite the entrance to the chambers He had reassembled some of his old staff Johnny Mockler was back with him in education I was handling toxics and water issues resources issues generally and transportation Liz Kirsten was there again who she had been with him in Rev and Tax in the years after he had lost the speakership election And several others The present parliamentariat Dotson Wilson was on staff and another couple of people who had specialized roles There were maybe six or seven of us The big issue in '82 was groundwater pollution and toxic chemical issues and toxic chemical problems around the state so I involved myself in that initially The first big bill we had was a proposal we were trying to help Steve Peace who represented a San Diego constituency

WOLLENBERG Assemblyman Steve Peace

CONNELLY Then Assemblyman Steve Peace And Steve had a problem which was a consequence of a geographical phenomenon whereby much of Tijuana Mexico is uphill of San Diego So Tijuana then a town of well a million and five hundred a million and eight hundred thousand people probably larger than that in reality was not fitted with sewers in its entirety so much of it came down the Tijuana river and went out into the ocean The effluent because of a tidal phenomena littoral drifts brought the sewage north So Silver Strand Beach State Park [Laughter] was often covered with fecal matter from downtown Tijuana

WOLLENBERG Probably didn't help the tourist industry in San Diego

CONNELLY It didn't help at all. The great hotel down there on the beach, the Hotel Del Coronado, found it difficult to sell [Laughter] a view when the view came with an odor. So our solution was to build a sewer treatment plant on the border. We were going to build on the California side, using bond money. I think we started out with \$15 million, or \$20 million, it probably wasn't enough, and the idea was to float a bond issue with California's interest being to build a treatment plant to treat the sewage effluent from Tijuana, Mexico. The constitutional lawyers said we could probably do it, we could show that there was a public interest to be served [Laughter] there certainly was. So we were getting ready to put it on the ballot as a legislatively inspired initiative, so we would take it through the houses first and then put it on the ballot for a vote.

And for some reason, Steve Peace lost interest in the thing, whether he thought that there was enough right-wing Republicans down there that didn't think we should be using California money on behalf of Mexico. I've forgotten the issue. Anyhow, he backed out, so it became Willie's bill. So we took it to the first hearing on the assembly side in the Natural Resources Committee, and I actually went down and took samples of the effluent out of the middle of the river, wore a big pair of waders and walked out into that river. And they were *awful* looking, yellow, syrupy, just terrible stuff. And we used that as a focal point for Brown's presentation. He had a wonderful time, he did a wonderful job with the presentation. Of course, we got a 100 percent vote, and everybody in the committee became co-authors on the bill. [Laughter] Usually you don't have that sort of acclamation in a hearing room [Laughter], but this was a

biggee

Then that was in the spring of '82 and every year Willie would take thirty or forty legislators and go back to Washington D C So he said Connelly I want you to come with us this time I want you to follow this up with the Mexican people in Washington So we get to Washington D C [Laughter] and I called up the Mexican embassy and I talked to the first secretary and he knew about the bill because the Mexicans were offended feeling we were usurping their responsibilities

WOLLENBERG Oh

CONNELLY They didn't think it was funny and they didn't want us to do it We were beginning to get close to offending a sovereign government [Laughter] to the south of us here So I made an appointment for Brown and several of his other members to meet with the first secretary And when I got there none of the members showed up Willie didn't show up nobody So here I am trying to look like a delegation from California a staff guy named Connelly That didn't impress the first secretary who wouldn't speak to me in English

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY He was speaking Spanish and then he switched to German

WOLLENBERG [Laughter] German!

CONNELLY And since I don't speak either [Laughter] we were having some difficulty in really communicating Finally because he was sore that Willie hadn't shown up I guess he knew he had wasted an hour anyhow he had been educated at Princeton or something he spoke flawless English and we got to laughing about it He said You know the reason that you offend us with this he says

is Mexico is a poor country but it is a proud country I said Well we don't mean to offend We really don't you know [Laughter] We thought we were doing the right thing [Laughter] by treating your sewage He said Well that implies that we can't do it ourselves I said [Laughter] Well yes I guess one could infer that

So he said Well let me tell you how things work In Mexico City we have a mountain of trash And people whole generations of family live by leasing little segments of that mountain of trash and mining it for valuables recyclables and valuables He said That is a major industry in our major capital city And it is a statement of our total almost all pervasive poverty And so Mexico feels strongly that when the United States slights us by publicly taking a role that would be really be appropriate for the Mexican government we're offended So we don't care [Laughter] if a little bit of shit runs downhill on San Diego when our level of poverty drives us to much greater issues and questions I said well I certainly understood his position [Laughter] Later a plant did get built but it was built under the auspices of the Federal Border Commission

WOLLENBERG Right

CONNELLY And it was one of these things where we really shouldn't have been in it by ourselves anyhow because we were again dangerously close to negotiating with [Laughter] a foreign sovereign power and states aren't supposed to do that of course Even though when I was with Forestry we used to bring many many many Mexican bombaderos the Mexican firemen across the border bring them up to Lone California and train them at our fire academy We also

provided them with an enormous amount of equipment fire engines hoses picks shovels all the tools asbestos gloves turnout coats and boots We'd write them off in a fire we'd say Oh that's lost in a fire it's all wiped out We even gave them fire engines

WOLLENBERG Wow

CONNELLY Because it was in California's interest to have somebody fighting the fire on the other side of the border before it got here

WOLLENBERG Sure

CONNELLY But the bond never did get on the ballot but it did get built and it's in place and running today Another one of these good ideas that started here and the feds finally pick it up

WOLLENBERG Like the Coast Guard

CONNELLY Like the Coast Guard approach control system

WOLLENBERG During that interim time after you went to the state senate and then went on to CDF were you still keeping in contact with Brown?

CONNELLY Well yes We had contact and when I was at Forestry I would go to him occasionally for help when we needed help with legislation or help with budgets or help with those kind of things So we maintained our rapport

WOLLENBERG So that led to this idea of going back

CONNELLY Right Going back into the Ways and Means Committee or the Senate Finance Committee staff did not enthrall me I mean fiscal committee staff work you do the same thing over and over and over I mean you're in the same cycle you're in the budget cycle you start in August you miss Thanksgiving and Christmas you go crazy for three or four months in the first part of the year

and then you're left with a feeling of great emptiness as the budget is finally passed sometime around June. You know, I'd been there and I'd done that and I had sort of exhausted it, so I wasn't looking forward to going back to the senate. And I knew Willie would be more fun, and indeed it was.

WOLLENBERG: Of course, he had gone through this extraordinary thing of being elected speaker the year before with the votes of the Republican caucus.

CONNELLY: Twenty seven or twenty nine [Laughter] Republican votes out of the forty one necessary to make him speaker.

WOLLENBERG: And this was at a time when the Republican caucus was controlled by a conservative.

CONNELLY: Very conservative.

WOLLENBERG: Carol Hallett was the Republican leader. How was an African American liberal Democrat able to pull that off?

CONNELLY: Well, obviously there were major problems inside the Republican caucus, and Willie was always one to capitalize on the confusion of his enemies. And his enemies were often confused. Legislative caucuses are always rife with conflict. Parenthetically, I talked to the Republican caucus one time when we were in one of our budget crises, and it was the most extraordinary experience I have ever had. I mean, I have subsequently taught school at the seventh grade level, and the seventh graders [Laughter] were better behaved than the Republican caucus was.

Now, I have never been in the Democratic caucus, so maybe they're equally juvenile. But Willie saw that his enemy's enemy was his friend, and Carol Hallett was a bright, able woman who managed to persuade herself that the

best thing to do [Laughter] was to give Willie Brown the twenty nine or thirty whatever the hell the number was and that he would make good on his promise that she had heard Now this was always what the perceiver perceived when they were talking to Willie I think that she perhaps thought that there would be more in it for the Republican caucus [Laughter] than as it turned out there was since there was absolutely nothing in it for the Republican caucus

WOLLENBERG I don't think they figured he was going to stay in power for fifteen years

CONNELLY I think that at best they thought that it would be a temporary thing and that there would be an opportunity to march against him again but it didn't happen They were never able to challenge him until they briefly flirted with it in '88 when they thought they were going to win the Gang of Five dissident Democrats but it was not meant to be With twenty nine or thirty Republican votes in his pocket Willie went right back to the Democratic caucus and secured 100 percent support from them After that the Republican votes were superfluous in any event And he never looked back

WOLLENBERG His opponent for the speakership had been Howard Berman

CONNELLY Howard Berman

WOLLENBERG Who I guess was also a liberal Democrat

CONNELLY That's right You know the liberal Democrats always gnawed on each other They always did The Republicans gnaw on each other the conservative Republicans But Berman went on to the Congress of course And he's still there as did the guy who does all the health education and welfare stuff for Congress

WOLLENBERG Henry Waxman?

- CONNELLY Henry Waxman was of that same era and that same group
- WOLLENBERG Same group of southern California liberals
- CONNELLY And they're fine effective legislators and I'm glad they're operating on a federal level because they do more serious things than we did here in Sacramento
- WOLLENBERG So I guess at that time Brown's staff had to interact with the Deukemejian administration a very conservative Republican governor And I guess by now Willie Brown is the leading Democrat
- CONNELLY That's right that's right
- WOLLENBERG How did that relationship work?
- CONNELLY Well Deukemejian was an old timer He'd been around probably since the late fifties So he had essentially the same background as Brown did so he had some of the same mores and trappings and he had the same history It was colored by their ideology differences in ideology but they were essentially compatible people They understood both of them understood that they needed each other that it was a symbiotic relationship there was no such thing as one person triumphing over the other it just wasn't going to happen Besides Deukemejian had been around the senate for years and the assembly before that he knew the budgets and this sort of thing things that embarrass and hinder a governor You know no governor of California ever sees himself as only the governor of California [Laughter] they always see themselves of course as potentially a world leader and they can always hear Air Force One revving up in the background So there would be no point in picking fights with somebody who was clearly [Laughter] in control of one house of the

legislature

And they got along fine Willie used to take a quart of ice cream down there with him to budget meetings or when they had these Big Three and Big Five meetings Willie got a lot of input That wasn't a problem there was none of this racial stuff by that time that had all come to a halt Nobody was playing those games at all I think we moved past that A lot of the older members who were more likely to do that kind of thing and were of that persuasion were gone by the early eighties And the times were changing and the public wouldn't have put up with it If somebody had pulled those kind of games and the press had picked up on it it would have been devastating in California

Also California was coming out of the great inflationary recessions and I think times were not as good as they were going to be but they were not bad in the early eighties So it wasn't a bad time to be here Budgets more or less got out on time and you know there were no great divisive issues that were breaking us up Although there were plenty of issues

One of the things that I worked on for Willie early on was a bill to revamp the Department of Health Services especially on potable drinking water issues because it was becoming clear from university research and from other research that California had substantially poisoned itself over the years with pesticide application very carelessly done where water had been permitted to be contaminated We were learning that you can't take contaminants out [Laughter] Unfortunately they are there forever and that the mistakes that were made in the forties and fifties when we were building the water system

the California water plant and the federal water plant had made the same mistake that Hammurabi had made in the Tigris Euphrates Valley 4 000 years ago That is to say it was fun and games and it was exciting to build water transmission facilities that brought water in It wasn't anywhere near as much fun to build drainage systems to take these tailing waters out So even in the days of ancient Mesopotamia when they didn't have pesticides they did have selenium salts which are a natural constituent of the soil And these were leached out by these vast increases in the amount of water both in the state and the federal system and we had the great sink down there by

WOLLENBERG Kesterson in the Central Valley?

CONNELLY Kesterson where the birds were born with the brain outside of the skull and all the rest of this kind And it scared the hell out of people

WOLLENBERG This was occurring just at this time the early eighties

CONNELLY Just about that time Then there was an epidemiological study done by a bunch of housewives and mothers down in San Jose They discovered that by simply buying themselves a map of the city of San Jose and doing the fieldwork themselves they found a high incidence of cancer in the area around where Kodak had its plant There was a chemical that was used in that process which turned out to be a carcinogen So people were beginning to realize that we're poisoning ourselves Most of the poisons are still there [Laughter] it's just not as big an issue as it was then And in some cases I'm sure that the threats were overstated But there were plenty of places down in the valley where it was a common practice to pour agricultural tailing waters into abandoned oil wells Well you know I don't know where people thought that stuff was going

[Laughter] but it went into the substrata the architecture of the rock underneath the valley and so you were putting contaminants in which now of course it is impossible to get out

WOLLENBERG Yes Was this an issue that Speaker Brown really got concerned about or was it the kind of thing where he'd allow you to do?

CONNELLY No it was an issue toxics was a big issue and it was in the newspapers all the time People were frightened about it It showed up in every poll So I was encouraged to do whatever needed to be done to work with members that were carrying legislation The big issue was moving toxics out of the Department of Agriculture [Laughter] where there was sort of a protected activity and maybe move it into Department of Health Services or a newly created water entity In fact we wrote about that a little bit later '83 or '84 we wrote a bill that would have reorganized the Department of Health Services And at the same time the governor did a bill He didn't use the bill process he used the process where there's an executive process called a Governor's Reorganization Plan whereby you just get an up or down vote in both houses on the thing

WOLLENBERG To reorganize the regulatory structure?

CONNELLY To reorganize it was the Reorganization Plan that is in fact what it's called We thought it just moved the chairs around on the Titanic but it didn't make any difference and I thought we had a pretty good bill I turned it in to Brown and he said Well this is pretty far reaching Now this is not going to be an easy one so I want every member of my caucus to be a co author on this So I took it around and we got every member of the Assembly Democratic caucus to go on as co author and we got a lot of senators a lot of Democratic senators

It was obviously something that needed to happen. After all of that and you know this was a couple hundred page bill it was a big effort. I didn't do it alone there were lots and lots of people helping me mostly staff from the house. It was an effort that looked like it had the momentum to pass. He called me one day.

WOLLENBERG This is Willie?

CONNELLY Willie called me. You know again it was like Ways and Means. I didn't see him a lot. I'd see him at a staff meeting once a week. But we didn't go out to lunch together or anything like that. He was always sort of aloof towards many of his staff. Some of his staff you know like Bobby Medsker his press secretary was in there all the time and a lot of people would go in and sit there in the evening and kibbutz with him you know. And I never felt comfortable doing that never wanted to do it and I never felt comfortable doing it. That's why I always called him Mr. Brown or Mr. Speaker. It was never Willie you know. He used to call me Bobby when he was happy with me and he'd call me You Asshole when he was not happy with me.

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY And there were a couple of occasions when that happened too. Anyhow he called me one afternoon he said What are we doing to trash haulers in my bill? I said Well it affects them because it affects where they dump and what they have to do before they abandon a dump site. He said Well I'm a little unhappy about that. It never went any further than that. Well it turned out he was representing a trash hauling firm.

WOLLENBERG NorCal?

CONNELLY NorCal yes unfortunately So he would never set the bill He would never set the bill for a hearing And I pleaded with him because we put a lot of effort in it and it was something I thought was really useful and it was in the 84 election that toxics was such a big issue As a matter of fact that's when we had what turned out to be a funny incident which looked serious at the time When Jack O Connell won his second election in Santa Barbara and just before the election a truck that was headed for Casmailia which is a Class One dump site in western Santa Barbara County was passing on Highway 101 right through downtown Santa Barbara and the bottom literally melted out of the truck And it dumped several hundred thousand gallons of a toxic soup which created a yellowish red cloud billowed up over the city and the city fell apart They took school buses to the schools and loaded kids on it and drove away There were people [Laughter] who didn't know where their kids were for twenty four hours There was absolutely no threat from this thing I mean it was highly localized The fire department arrived on the scene It was a brand new truck and they'd been told Never never mix your loads because you're not a chemist you don't know what you're putting in the back of that damn truck

WOLLENBERG So in other words it literally rotted out?

CONNELLY It burned through the acids actually burned through the steel tank of a brand new tank truck the thing had been only three or four months old So on the asphalt it was burning the asphalt [Laughter] it was pretty spectacular I didn't see that but I was there a couple hours later The fire department put 300 000 gallons of water from many mains onto this thing which had the effect of

moving it downhill from Highway 101 towards the ocean Which now you took a bad situation and made it a *heck* of a lot worse And some city worker saw what was going on and understood was smart enough It was in the Santa Barbara River which is a real little tiny mostly dry tributary but is a channel that's where the water went with the toxics and it was going downhill So he ran down and he found a Caterpillar tractor and got it started and pushed up an earth berm and some people helped him put rolls of visquine plastic sheeting down and they impounded much of the water Much of the water ended up there with all the toxics in it this awful smoky stew of stuff

So Jack was carrying bills for highway safety this is the time when we were putting into effect many of these truck inspections and not only was there a hell of a lot of traffic going down 101 to Casmalia but a lot of traffic going down 101 [Laughter] was going to Vandenberg Air Force Base It was interesting the good point that the highway patrol made to me was that the trucks carrying toxic materials to Casmalia were 70 percent to 90 percent water and a small percentage of toxic chemicals The trucks going to Vandenberg Air Force Base were carrying rocket fuel it was 100 percent there was no water in the rocket fuel And if one of these suckers had lost its bottom you would have had as bad a toxic spill imaginable So as I mentioned earlier I was flying a lot in those days so I rented a plane and I took Gail Kauffman

WOLLENBERG She was a staff member?

CONNELLY She was a staff person and she was working on O Connell's campaign And we took some other people from here and we flew down and we took Jack

and we got the local television station to meet us and we went out to the truck actually to the scene of the truck. The highway patrol because we had a member of the legislature with us took us right up to the scene of the accident while there was still smoke was coming out of the blackened asphalt. And I looked at the side of the truck and it was the Reagan Trucking Company. And Richie Ross was in his heyday at that point.

WOLLENBERG: Richie Ross was a political consultant?

CONNELLY: Was the big political strategist. I thought, Oh! Richie, you've done this, you've rigged this accident! For a minute I thought, He wouldn't go this far! I thought, Yes, actually he would go that far!

WOLLENBERG: And Reagan was president at that time.

CONNELLY: Reagan was president at that time [Laughter] yes, he sure was. And we had Reagan prominently in all those television spots, many of which we used later in the campaign.

The funny spin off of that was some months later the trucking company that was hired to haul this contaminated water to Casimilha couldn't get paid. They couldn't get paid because of the order in which the 911 calls were made. You were supposed to call the lead agency which would have been the Department of Fish and Game in this case. And somebody called Caltrans. And because the Office of Emergency Services works on a very strictly documented protocol because the wrong order, the wrong incident commander was on scene, he couldn't get paid.

So Willie, I explained that to Brown and he said, This is absolutely insane. He said, Get those people up here! So I called Fish and Game, OES,

(Office of Emergency Services) Caltrans the Toxic Substance Spill I mean we must have had fifteen agencies and we got them in this conference room over here And it was the first time many of those people had ever seen each other face to face They had been on the phone to each other but they had never actually met And Brown came in and he said Look how can you guys respond to things like this if you don't even know each other? How can you have some kind of a coordinated effort? I mean it was so obvious And good things did follow from that But we actually had to get the Deukemejian governor's office to override the Department of Finance's reluctance to pay the bill And we got this guy paid We got the Reagan Truck Company paid Willie did [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG But the original bill never went forward

CONNELLY No

WOLLENBERG You think because of the NorCal?

CONNELLY Well I think so I was never sure This must have been '85 that bill And it didn't work There was a curious spin off on that too We had sort of a quarrel Willie and I did in his anteroom His secretaries were there and they were all good pals of mine they were embarrassed as hell and

WOLLENBERG A quarrel over the bill?

CONNELLY Over this bill He said Well what do you want? I said Well I want you to set the bill And he said Why? I said Well because it's important He said It's not important to me And I realized well this thing had metamorphised into something else and it wasn't going to happen I was pretty saddened by that and I felt that I was just spinning my wheels I wasn't doing

anything

WOLLENBERG But that was the bill that had been signed on by the

CONNELLY The entire Democratic caucus Yes Nobody ever asked what happened to that you know

WOLLENBERG And he had the power at that point to just stop a bill like that

CONNELLY That s right To stop it And probably enough members recognized that we were offending a lot of people [Laughter] a lot of interests in this bill This was about the time that that bill slipped through which excused the garbage trucks in southern California from having to keep weight records The guy went to jail assembly member went to jail over that It was one of these things that went through at the last minute in September Bruce I can t think of Bruce s last name

WOLLENBERG Bronzan?

CONNELLY Something like that No not Bronzan but Bruce another guy from southern California Anyhow He s had lots of trouble over that one And the house had been stung so I think they were sort of afraid of these things

Anyhow the upshot of it was I was in the back of the chamber I didn t often go into the chamber during the Monday and Thursday sessions I didn t have any business there and I knew Willie didn t like to have staff hanging around the back because a lot of staff members hang around back there and it didn t add anything But I was there one day and he saw me And he was making a speech I don t know what the subject was but he was talking about how the pressures that come on him at the speaker And he looked over and he said Sometimes the pressure

[End of Tape 7 Side A]

[Begin Tape 7 Side B]

WOLLENBERG Yes OK so there you were he had indirectly mentioned your bill?

CONNELLY Yes I think it was just a way of giving me some kind of credit for the act a kind of way of apologizing to me in a sense yes I think that's what it was about

WOLLENBERG In addition to dealing with the Deukemejian administration you also had to deal with the other house and I guess Willie Brown had to deal with Dave Roberti as the president pro tem the Democratic leader of the senate

CONNELLY Yes And I made it a point not to insert myself any more often than was absolutely necessary with Senator Roberti because of the earlier incident which I recounted with Forestry

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY He never held that against me And I think on reflection he realized that I had done him a hell of a favor or at least I certainly had had his best interests at heart But I was fairly close to Al Alquist who was the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee Al liked to go flying so I often took him places by air His district is the southern Santa Clara Valley and the highway patrol has an annual golf tournament and dinner at a place down near Hollister So for two or three years in those early eighties I would take him and other senators would fly them down use a six seat airplane so I could take five of them along with me We would fly down and go to this golf tournament Willie encouraged that I mean this was part of the tentacles of his speakership moving in so I could always call Alquist or members of the Senate Finance

Committee There were so many of the older members who were there when I was working there

WOLLENBERG So you still had those connections

CONNELLY So I had lots of connections So we flew down one time and it was the year of the Coalinga earthquake so I suspect it was probably 1983 maybe '84 We were at the highway patrol banquet when the word came that the earthquake had happened just after noon So Alquist who was the author of the Alquist somebody

WOLLENBERG Priolo

CONNELLY Priolo Earthquake Seismic Safety Commission he said Well let's go see it The highway patrol [Laughter] was right there I said What about it? They said Well we'll meet you at the airport There was a little strip near Coalinga or we landed on the highway we did that on more than one occasion too Why I still had a license I don't know But I only did it when I had senators with me [Laughter]

Well we flew down there and the highway patrol took us into town and it was quite an extraordinary sensation because the town when you first looked at it there were very few high rise buildings so it looked like there wasn't much damage except out on the main street But there had been a very substantial lateral shaking and almost every house in town was off its foundations So there were huge lawsuits as a consequence of it So we toured the town and went back got in the airplane flew home

The next day I did one of the things I never did again [Laughter] this is something that I learned a lesson from Brown used to like us to write him a

memo whenever we traveled with other members or with other members of the other house. Just what did you do, where did you go, what did you see, what happened, what was the issue. So I was feeling frolic, and I wrote him a memorandum which said, Mr. Brown, with the senator, et cetera, because of his interest in the seismic activity, we went to Coalinga, and I fear to report that what is going on down there is an enormous insurance fraud, because no one has ever seen Coalinga before the earthquake, so we have no way of knowing that it hasn't always looked that way. [Laughter] So I think it's a big scam. And I thought he'd get a laugh out of it.

WOLLENBERG: You were being

CONNELLY: I was being facetious. So I sent the memorandum down to him and forgot about it. A couple of days later, Steve Thompson, who was the chief of staff, came up, and he said, he had my memo in his hand. And he said, Are you kidding? I said, Well, of course I'm kidding! And he said, Well, Brown doesn't think you're kidding.

WOLLENBERG: [Laughter]

CONNELLY: And he's got it in his hand, and he's going to make an announcement from the podium. I said, Jesus! So I ran downstairs, and his secretary, I forgot which one it was, it wasn't Ida, Ida was gone by this time. But Joanne, Joanne said, He's in there with Margo Kidder, the movie actress, because he was escorting her around at the time. I said, I don't care if he's in there, who he's with. And I opened the door and went in, and I never did that. He was in there, standing by his desk, talking. And he had my damn memo in his hand. I said, You know, Mr. Brown, I've been doing the most tactless, worst thing, this was

a sick joke And to this day I don't know whether he knew I was kidding or whether he would actually have done it But I got the memo I took the memo out of his hand I never took things out of his hand'

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY And I took it upstairs I still have the memo And there was another copy the one that Thompson had He said Well let's put it out as a press release See that's why I said I think Steve had a little growing up to do I said No I don't think we want to put that out there [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG What about the relationship between Brown and Roberti? I mean these are the two big Democratic honchos in Sacramento at that time

CONNELLY Yes and there was lots lots of competition Lots of competition Roberti controlled his house and he enjoyed a comfortable margin the whole time so he really was in a much more secure position And he wanted to be the big man that was his objective and felt he was entitled to it He you know he carried gun control legislation he carried medical legislation I mean he had a portfolio to take him forward to that position As did Brown so there was lots of head bumping And they were as different as they could be I mean no one has ever accused Dave Roberti of being colorful [Laughter] He just was not a colorful figure We used to always laugh at him because he would always walk along the hallways and he'd put one finger out on one hand and he'd walk close to the wall and he'd run that finger along the wall And so if you wanted to do a Dave Roberti imitation if you saw a friend down the hallway you'd walk over put your finger against the wall and they'd instantly know that you were mocking Dave Roberti [Laughter] You know we did terrible

silly childish things like that

WOLLENBERG Did he have as much control over his house as Brown had over the assembly?

CONNELLY No no because the senate doesn't lend itself to control you know it's so much smaller Brown's control usually derived almost exclusively from the fact that he appointed everybody to everything He could give and he could take away and he did So people knew that if they crossed him they would lose and many people did lose Robert couldn't do that In the assembly Willie was the speaker and he had somebody else as a figurehead Rules chairman Tom Bane for most of the time I was there then later John Burton And they were understood to be not as powerful They could do administrative in house housekeeping things but they weren't policy people Whereas Robert sat on his own Senate Rules Committee and they had the power of confirming gubernatorial appointees It is a senior house and they were very much aware of the seniority You used to hear them talk about the men of the senate You know they were still doing that when Rose Vuich was there

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY The men of the senate So he had a different kind of a house But nobody really disagreed with it And they were busy raising all kinds of money because those senate campaigns got real expensive they got exponentially more expensive and he had his problems He had you know Carpenter and Carpenter's staff [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG Senator

CONNELLY Senator Carpenter yes I can't think of the staff's name Denny Carpenter but he is a different Carpenter He was there too He was a Republican

WOLLENBERG Yes but anyway Paul Carpenter?

CONNELLY Paul Carpenter yes Who is a Ph D a very bright man a very skillful man and a guy [Laughter] who got himself into a very great deal of trouble and finally ended up in federal prison

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY So he had his handful The lobbyists have always been more inclined to work with the senate than the assembly because there are fewer

WOLLENBERG Fewer It's just fewer members to work with

CONNELLY I mean it is cost effective

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY And because in the assembly you had twenty three to twenty five committees in any given year and you had in the Ways and Means Committee twenty six or twenty seven people In the senate the biggest committee was Senate Finance in those days and it probably had twelve or thirteen people on it But many committees only had four or five And mostly the lobbyists in those days and probably all of us tended towards maintaining equilibrium They don't want to introduce a whole lot of newfangled ideas They don't want to make any big changes to the law

WOLLENBERG They want to stop things from happening

CONNELLY They want it to not happen So the way that you can do it in the senate without a lot of fanfare you have a five person committee in order to get a motion to move a bill you need three votes and then you need three aye votes Everybody present voting has to vote aye So these guys are all over sixty over there and in the middle of the afternoon they'd call a vote and a senator

would put a hand over his mic and whisper to the chairman and go out and go to the bathroom and he wouldn't come back. And so you only have two votes in the room. [Laughter] And so you know there was no fanfare it didn't have a tail on it. You know at some point if a bill wasn't destined to go someone would have to go to the bathroom one of these old guys would have to go to the bathroom and that was the way it worked.

WOLLENBERG You didn't even have to have a vote then you could just say that there was just not a quorum.

CONNELLY Yes I recognize that we are temporarily without a quorum and then they would screw around and put it on hold and come back to it later and then they'd never come back to it you know and it just sort of dribbled away. And there was no newspaper story about how so and so killed the bill you just he went to the bathroom. And if he was interviewed later he said Well I'm an old man I have to go to the bathroom. The senate was prone to that. And I suspect that there was plenty of monkeyshine going on I don't know I didn't have much to do with that and I wasn't in the [Laughter] fund raising part of legislation in any event.

WOLLENBERG It's around this time that you went for a brief interlude to the East Bay Regional Park District. Was that partly due to your sense that with the speaker that your bills were not moving?

CONNELLY Well I felt frustrated that maybe my efforts were even more in vain than they had been in the past and that we weren't breaking new ground. We were being very cautious and we were becoming very entrenched and what we were really interested in doing was not breaking any heads and not creating a lot of

controversy

WOLLENBERG And when you say we you really mean Speaker Brown

CONNELLY Yes Speaker Brown And the members around him There were members around him who wanted more substance This was the time of the grizzlies

WOLLENBERG We can talk about that when we talk about the Gang of Five

CONNELLY Yes But there were people who were beginning to say You know this is beginning to look a little too much like the senate and it's getting pretty conservative around here and blah blah blah So I had an opportunity Dave Pesonen who had been my boss and long time friend had recently been appointed to the general managership of the East Bay Regional Park District and he wanted me to come down and be his deputy general manager And I thought You know why not? You know do something different So I went down Just before that the year before that I had flirted briefly with Assemblyman Terry Goggin who was a liberal Democrat who was always a hop skip and a jump ahead of the bill collectors He had nothing but bankruptcy and financial problems And he had a friend who was a stockbroker in Beverley Hills The two of them bought a casino in Ely Nevada

He came to me one day and asked me if I would fly him out there I said Well certainly we'll fly out there And I flew over to Ely with Terry and his associate This was at a time when the Minuteman the big missile program was going to be put on the railroad cars and his idea was that he was going to buy this casino and two others and cash in on this big building this huge construction boom So we looked at it I took them out there a couple of times

they had purchased this thing this hotel casino in Ely out of bankruptcy And after a few months he said Well why don t you consider going out there and being the general manager of the casinos? [Laughter] I guess I was bored and disaffected so I said Yes I ll go out and I ll take a look at it but the only condition I ll do that on is I want to take an audit team because by this time [Laughter] I knew something about the industry and I knew something about the people who were running it You don t have to spend much time around the casino business to find out about it In the small areas of Nevada you know that you want to watch yourself

So it turns out that the biggest audit firm for Nevada casinos is over here in Santa Rosa California So I got two of them and we flew out to Ely and we sat down with the books on a weekday morning at 10 00 and by 2 00 in the afternoon they said The place is not only bankrupt but it s being looted by its present management Plus no one has been paying the federal payroll taxes

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY And they are in arrears for four to six months So that rocked me back on my heels so I said Well let s go over to Elko where Terry and his associate had bought another casino for \$50 000 in a federal bankruptcy court And there was a third one out in Wendover which is on the border with Utah [Laughter] We weren t in the second place more than two hours they said This place is so far gone there is no resurrecting it There is no possibility They owe so much and there are so many things that need to be done here So in a day s time it became clear so I flew them home thanked them saw to it that they got paid which wasn t always the case with Goggin And I told him that I was no

longer interested in even considering it. He was furiously angry with me and went into a rage into his office and called me all kinds of names [Laughter] And three days later the federal government went out and padlocked the place [Laughter] and carried away all the slot machines and all the table games and all that kind of stuff. Literally carried out on hand carts because the fool who was looting the place had neglected to pay the taxes. I mean I skirted with disaster [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG So you went down to the East Bay

CONNELLY So I went to East Bay Parks and East Bay Parks was a whole different experience because I had never worked in local government before. As you know East Bay Parks is a bi county agency

WOLLENBERG Alameda and Contra Costa

CONNELLY Alameda and Contra Costa Counties and it replaces the Department of Parks and Recreation. I said Gee what a wonderful experience. I'm going to see all the people happily building parks and maintaining parks and providing recreational opportunities

And it had little to do with that. It was an elderly creaky bureaucracy that was very hidebound and very spoiled and did very little work run by a board of directors who had lunch breakfast and dinner almost every day of the week charged to the park district while they *endlessly* debated and talked nonsense and didn't do anything. And I found parks that were not on the maps because they were little parcels that had been given to the park district as mitigation factors by local developers. They complemented a housing development someplace and they were paid for or they were maintained by the park district

but they were not really available to the public. Why? Because they didn't want the black people and the other undesirables as they used to use the phrase to come out of Oakland and Hayward and these kind of areas and come up and use these parks in the affluent areas in the area behind the Oakland hills. I had about six months of that.

I found myself back with the police. They had a huge police department they had seventy or eighty uniformed police officers they ran a big helicopter operation search and rescue. There was a union there were two unions one was the police and one was the general employees. And the fools that ran that place had allowed these unions to create simultaneous contracts so that they would come due at the same time every two or four years and they would use the fact of the proximity of the two dates as leverage. I sat down with the fiscal officer of the place and we worked very hard on a contract for the cops. It was a time when there was not big increases in the consumer price index there was no reason to give big raises a 2 or 3 percent raise would have been *very* generous. We came to the board with the recommendation the cops and the employees filled the meeting room with placards women came in carrying their babies and they carried on.

The board went into executive session came back out and gave them a 5 or 6 percent raise and I thought The heck with you guys The heck with you guys That was not for me I didn't belong to that particular old boys network I didn't want to belong to that old boys network so I just took a hike. I thought they were reprehensible in the way they were ripping off the public funds for all the meals and the drinks and the bottles of wine and all the rest

of the stuff that was going on. It just was not my piece of cake. The chief of police, whom I thought was one of the world's great jerks, a man who was incompetent, as well as being a toady, he used to come over and hang around me. We arranged to have a meeting once every week, we'd have lunch together.

Because it was clear, the place was out of control. We had several sexual harassment issues, and the police were the worst offenders. We had brought in a group of trainers so that they would at least have some sense of what the heck we were talking about. And they drove the trainers out! I said, "You know, you've got to realize, pal, that if we ever have a lawsuit, and that comes up, that is not going to help our case. The fact that we had a consultant in here to try and educate these clowns, and one of them was driven out in tears by your police officers. How do you think that's going to work with a jury sometime? Anyhow, he ended up in the state prison because he had a little sideline. He was using the CLETs, the California Law Enforcement Technical terminals, which you use to run background checks (that's what the police use, if they stop you on the highway), he was running a little business and doing background checks for businesses. It's a felony. [Laughter] It is a felony, so he went down."

WOLLENBERG: And eventually Dave Pesonen had problems with sexual harassment. Was that while you were there?

CONNELLY: No. It was beginning to happen just as I left. I only stayed for six months. A woman came down from the senate. A woman I knew who she was. I did not know her, but I knew about her, and I knew that she was trouble with a capital

T She was a woman with whom there has always been an aura of bad things happening And I warned David you don't want to bring that woman on staff you don't want to have her down here she's bad news And that's the woman Dave managed to get himself involved with [Laughter] But that was after I left

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY So I called Willie and I made an appointment and I came up and he was sitting behind his desk shuffling papers He never never really would give you his full attention I said You know I made a mistake Mr Brown I have no business being in local government and I'd like to come back up here and work for you He said Well he said How much money do you make? I said You know the same as I made six months ago He said OK and he sent me over to the Assembly Office of Research I thought Well this is a terrible thing AOR is sort of an elephant's graveyard for superannuated staff and people they don't know what else to do with

But Steve Thompson was running the place [Laughter] He had been removed from staff there was a metamorphosis going on different people were coming into Brown's immediate staff So I went over there and they had been working for a year and a half on a toxics report on the major dumps around the state and how they were operating whether there was enough of them whether they were operating under control whether you were just moving the toxic compounds from one place to another [Laughter] which is what of course we were doing We published that I ramrodded that I got it published I was only there for a short time It was in the middle of the summer that I came back to

Sacramento maybe July and in November he called me up one day and he said Would you like to be the CAO? [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG What s a CAO?

CONNELLY That s the chief administrative officer

WOLLENBERG Chief administrative officer of the assembly?

CONNELLY I said Well yes I d like to be the chief administrative officer of the assembly He said Well you go over and see Tom Bane You know Tom Bane

WOLLENBERG Assemblyman Tom Bane?

CONNELLY Assemblyman Tom Bane now deceased a guy who had been in the assembly since the late fifties and old old line I would hesitate to call him liberal but he was an old timer stalwart and he was quite out of it He was in his late seventies and not in good health I made an appointment went over and talked to him I think he was relieved that he didn t remember me from Brown s staff but I know that even though my name is Connelly he was relieved to find that I was not black I mean that was palpable on his face I mean he thought Willie was hoisting off one of his black staff in the capital and they had not been altogether successful Some were very successful Dotson Wilson was a superstar but others were not so successful

We got along pretty well

WOLLENBERG What was Bane s position?

CONNELLY He was chairman of the Rules Committee

WOLLENBERG And so the CAO in effect is also the chief staff member of the Rules Committee

CONNELLY Of the Rules Committee yes And allegedly the CAO is elected or is appointed by the chairman of the Rules Committee [Laughter] But in fact the situation was Brown was appointing me

WOLLENBERG And I guess that s just another indication of how much power he had obtained

CONNELLY Of how he reserves power how he reserves power to himself He didn t change the rules The rules still said that the Rules Committee appointed the chief administrative officer but the fact of the situation was that he appointed me

WOLLENBERG And I guess the idea was to appoint someone who was a traditional member of his staff somebody he knew somebody he could trust

CONNELLY I suspect that s why I got rehired I mean he always played chess he was always weeks months sometimes years ahead of himself in his planning He knew that my immediate predecessor was a woman an Asian woman She was appointed by Lou Papan who was the chairman for many years of the Rules Committee the enforcer a guy with a personality like a tarantula He and the young woman had allegedly had a relationship which was not entirely professional And Lou tried to go to the senate and he d lost his bid for the senate so he was gone and so it was time for her to pack her bags and go down the road

That was a very very sad transition there were staff there who thought they were there forever And Brown was always pretty good He didn t put people in place to be toadies I mean he really expects you to do the job So I fired a couple of people I fired one of the deputies who was a young black man whom I felt was not competent and not suited for the job A few months later

I fired another black man who was in a wheelchair who was our bill assignment officer. He was over his head, it was just the job was way too much for him.

WOLLENBERG Did Brown back you up?

CONNELLY Brown backed me up in both cases. But in both cases they went down and waited for him in the basement, that was the traditional way that staff operated because it is hard to get past the secretaries, but they knew that if they hung around the basement at 7:00 or 8:00 or 9:00 at night, he'd come down in the elevator and they could catch him before he got to his car. And people did that, you know, they only did it once because he didn't like it. [Laughter] And both of them did that, and in both cases [Laughter] he said, you know, Connelly is the CAO, if he wants you gone, you're gone. And that helped because it was a hard job, but it would have been an impossible job if I hadn't had that kind of support from him. I mean, if I hadn't known that I could do what needed to be done.

And I always brought him along. I never acted unilaterally. I didn't do what Richie Ross did. Richie Ross was briefly Willie's chief of staff. Richie used to think of himself as an independent power broker, and his idea was that he was in a powerful position and he would behave in a powerful manner. And I never believed that for a minute. I knew that I was there because Brown had appointed me to that role, and I knew that I had enough sense of self-worth to know that he did so because I was competent to run the business operations of a \$100 million a year corporation with 106 district offices and nearly 1,800 employees, because I'd had some experience, some general

experience along those lines at Forestry and he knew about that he knew that I d been chief deputy director over there And I d been through the chairs and there wasn t anybody else around who had been through the chairs

WOLLENBERG Maybe you should describe specifically what the job entails what were the duties of the CAO

CONNELLY [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG [Laughter] In theory and maybe also in practice

CONNELLY Well after I came on I came on in December of 86 they were in recess and reconvened in January The chief administrative officer has two main roles One is that he is responsible for personnel accounting accounts receivable/payable the organization of the sergeant at arms office the printing plant later the television station maintaining and operating and purchasing and leasing fleets of automobiles And we added another adjunct of a statewide computer network which had major hubs in Sacramento San Francisco Los Angeles and San Diego with substations at the 106 district offices We had leases with all these with private entities all over the state for providing services and office space that sort of thing We had an enormous purchasing program because we were running 106 offices and they use [Laughter] a lot of pencils and stationary We bought our own telephone system we eventually tied into a statewide system which enabled people to use computers real time in all 106 district offices so that they would be able to have the same screens that we had in the capital We completely redid our computer operation in fact created a whole new computer operation for the assembly alone

The second major function was that this Rules Committee CAO also handles bill assignments. And the bill assignments [Laughter] are pretty important because where a bill gets assigned in its first or second committee here is pretty important. A friendly committee or an unfriendly committee can have an enormous impact on the progress of legislation. So in past years the Third House had had an inordinate amount of influence.

WOLLENBERG The lobbyists

CONNELLY The lobbyists and coming in and working the staff to see. Well, I want that bill to go to Utilities and Commerce or I want that bill to go to F and I or I want that bill to go to Rev. and Tax. There was little coherence in this process. But it was an important role because it was there that a lot of mistakes could be made and it was there that Brown was vulnerable and he knew he was vulnerable because if the lobbyists were calling the shots, why the hell was he the speaker? So I wasn't there very long at all before I realized that we needed to establish in fact it was almost instantly a systematic way of assigning bills and the only thing that made any sense was a precedent based program. So we went through and I had a wonderful young woman named Carrie Cornwall who was a graduate of Princeton. She left us for a while and went to Princeton got her master's degree.

[End of Tape 7 Side B]

[Begin Tape 8 Side A]

WOLLENBERG The precedent basing of bills being assigned to committees. And again just to clarify in other words as the chief administrative officer of the Rules Committee would you be actually assigning the bills or would you be making

recommendations to the committee or the assembly?

CONNELLY No no what we would do is the Rules Committee has the function of assigning the bills to the policy and fiscal committees Each Monday and Thursday mornings the Rules Committee met In anticipation of these meetings we would create an agenda of administrative items everything from pay scales to retirement all the stuff that any business has Plus we would have a full agenda of bills and a recommendation for each based on a computer based list of all bills affecting the same code sections for the past ten years That way the bills got assigned to subject matter committees based on precedent not the whim of a lobbyist And we would put them together in the form of a consent calendar And because they knew that we were being really careful and were staying with a precedent system which we could defend they very rarely would take anything off the consent calendar The press covered these meetings If you took something off the consent calendar people wanted to know *why* you were taking it off the present consent calendar

WOLLENBERG Yes If there was any political deals

CONNELLY So immediately you drew attention to yourself it was always unfavorable attention so it was much safer and much cleaner and much more sanitary to have these consent agendas with all the bills on it I never saw the press I mean never saw the lobbyists after that I didn't encourage them to come in Those few lobbyists who were old personal friends of mine ex staffers lots of times well not lots of times once a month or so I'd go out and have lunch with them but I would always pay for the lunch I would call the maitre d at the hotel or the restaurant and say I don't want the bill at the table You'll have

my credit card when we come in and I don't want the bill at the table. So I never let anybody buy me lunch because there is *no free lunch*.

WOLLENBERG Right! [Laughter]

CONNELLY [Laughter] There is no free lunch. Even with friends.

WOLLENBERG Yes. You were saying there was a young woman who helped with the precedents?

CONNELLY Yes. Carrie Cornwall. She was an ex-assembly fellow. She was a graduate of UCLA in economics. She later went back and got an M.A. in economics from Princeton. She was just a super bright young woman. And I had a series. Jenny Woodinski, her successor, Miss Scott, who was a graduate nuclear engineer, for God's sake, had come through our program. And these women were all in the same role. They were the bill assignment consultant. They would always come to the meeting and if there was anybody who had a question about something on a consent agenda, they would stand up and they would cite the precedents and the reasons. And we would rehearse this. There was no windy explanation. It was very terse, very short, and we almost always said the same thing because we would always [Laughter] follow the same process.

So it gave everybody shelter. And that's why the members liked it. Even when we had partisan bills where one house, one party or the other had a preference on the thing, they preferred to leave it alone because it was safer. There were other ways to get at the bills. But the drawback of the thing was that the lobbyists can fix something and someone can always get around it. The lobbyists started using multiple references in the codes. So instead of a bill being in the insurance code alone, so we knew where to go, they would put

part of it in the insurance code part of it in the civil code part of it in the resources code part so it would be all over the place So then they could come in and try to argue

WOLLENBERG It would be in one committee rather than another?

CONNELLY So then we had to develop a system called precedential preponderance So it was always an effort to stay ahead of the Third House because I mean that's how they make their living But as I said earlier [Laughter] they could always do it a lot easier in the senate where none of these trivialities were in effect The Senate Rules Committee met with the pro tem and they assigned the bills over on the other side of the house and they did it with a system that was substantially different

WOLLENBERG I would think though that politics would still get in the process Certainly the speaker there must have been some times when he wanted bills going to certain committees

CONNELLY Yes They called it speakerizing the bill and sometimes that would happen But it didn't happen very often and it didn't happen very often because of the way Willie had the house organized He appointed all the chairs

WOLLENBERG All the chairs of the committees

CONNELLY All the chairs of all his committees And even a few Republicans Not too many [Laughter] but there were some But for the most part they were Democrats They were his caucus And if he took a bill out of one committee and gave it to another for political reasons he offended [Laughter] the chairman from whose committee the bill was withdrawn So it did not behoove him to do that very often because it offended them publicly It made them

look like they were minions or puppets and they didn't like that. And he didn't want to do that because he made a lot of efforts to not offend and not to heap scorn or ridicule on his chairs. Because he had to meet with those same guys and their caucus and they would scream bloody murder. Why did you take that bill out of my committee?

Now occasionally it happened not very often and he was always very subtle about it. I usually wouldn't hear about it. Some member would say, "Well, let's look at that consent calendar. I think... don't you think...?" And then there would be a lot of nodding of heads and I would say, "Oh Jesus Christ, the fix is in."

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY But it didn't happen very often and it didn't happen because it wasn't in his interest for it to happen very often.

WOLLENBERG But speaking of dealing with members of the caucus, it was during this period that the most serious crisis of his speakership occurred.

CONNELLY Yes 87-88.

WOLLENBERG 87-88 the so-called "Gang of Five."

CONNELLY Yes. And these are all people who had been close to Willie. Steve Peace was close to Willie. Willie had been his mentor. Rusty Areias needed lots of help early on and got it. Jerry Eaves was not a mental giant; he was a little small-town politician who had come to Sacramento, got himself into trouble later on; it was sort of bound to happen. Gary Condit was a smart ass, a smart aleck.

WOLLENBERG John Calderon was the fifth.

CONNELLY Oh, John Calderon, yes. I never thought he was much of a mental giant either.

But they got offended I don't know why Willie often offended people this problem that he had way back in Ways and Means of being smarter than anybody else and outsmarting people and sometimes forgetting to do it graciously He did it in a Democratic caucus you know it was closed and there was nobody in there but them the members but you know they saw it they were embarrassed And he probably did that to them he probably ridiculed them He was good at ridicule

WOLLENBERG But wasn't there also an ideological divide? They were more conservative and moderate Democrats and Willie was moving towards the liberal so called Grizzlies?

CONNELLY Yes well I never noticed that kind of shift [Laughter] to the liberal side myself Yes there were people from the Bay Area and they were naturally Willie's kind of people I mean Tom Bates from Oakland and others that were of that persuasion that were more liberal minded

WOLLENBERG They called themselves the Grizzlies?

CONNELLY The Grizzlies yes

WOLLENBERG They were kind of a group that was trying to move liberal legislation

CONNELLY Yes Tom Hannigan was I think was prominent in that They thought the business community was getting too strong a grip on California government and I'm sure they were right [Laughter] because as one lobbyist told me one time we were always pretty good to rich folks around here Condit was you know an agricultural guy Areias was an agricultural guy Calderon was from southern California you know back out behind Los Angeles there in that never never land of redneck miasma

WOLLENBERG The Inland Empire?

CONNELLY Yes the Inland Empire yes I was going to talk about the Mormon church [Laughter] but that's probably not relevant And Steve Peace you know in those days San Diego which he represented was still full of retired navy officers You know Steve has had to tap dance real fast into the 21st century just to stay where he is in San Diego because the navy is gone and it is a town where they speak Spanglish and it is huge and it is growing faster than anyplace else in the state and it is no longer a retired naval captain's paradise But in those days it was pretty conservative It was transitioning

WOLLENBERG So these were all assembly members who wanted moderate policies

CONNELLY Yes they were interested in the business communities and the agribusiness communities interests Agribusiness always the Central Valley has always been a conservative place and the coastal agricultural valleys have always been conservative places The issue has always been water lots of it and free Don't restrict us in any way shape or form And Willie was not sympathetic to that [Laughter] because of course most of the people in California don't live in the Central Valley they live in the city and most of his members represented urban constituencies So his interests were if they were liberal and they were urban they were urban interests So that is where his strength was and that is the folks he was hearing from and that is where he was going to go

I don't know what particular issue in each of these cases tripped them over the line and made them enemies but there was always somebody there was always somebody who was mad at him You know there is always one speaker and seventy nine contenders It has always been that way Every one

of these birds thinks that they are speaker material And the lobbyists do a lot to foster this incredible and erroneous impression that so many of them have They tell them how wonderful and smart and bright and prescient they are and that their wonderfully insightful comments and their jokes are always the funniest and their depth of perception and mind is You know and a year or so of that or half a year of that and any human being is going to be affected by it And these people are very human [Laughter] And they become very much affected by it and they get to believing this stuff You know when you write a press release you always mention the member's name three times in the lead paragraph and two times in the second paragraph and keep repeating it through

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY And that is all a press release is And these guys got to believing their own press releases And I think that Willie had problems with people who had delusions of glory and grandeur and a firm belief in their gigantic capacity which existed mostly in their own imaginations But they all saw themselves as somehow going to break through and rise to a leadership position You know find an issue like the energy issue this spring People grab it and rush to the surface with it instant authorities and all this kind of stuff And nobody has told them no Nobody is saying You're full of stuff you don't know what you're talking about So it leads men and women of shallow intellect into believing their own press releases And it is very dangerous

WOLLENBERG In the case of these five back in the middle eighties their power was in the fact that their five votes combined with thirty six Republican votes would have

given them forty one votes to unseat the speaker

CONNELLY Forty one votes. They never got down to those bold terms. Well, they did at the end. But they always wanted to pretend that there were five of them, and they hoped that there were thirty six Democrats that would support them. They were always pious. I mean, if you read the story of the medieval church, and the Renaissance church, and the time of Lorenzo Medici, you will see striking parallels [Laughter] between that and the operations of any state legislature, particularly this one. These people, with these really screwy, wacky ideas about how they are going to rise to power. What they forgot was that the thirty six Democratic votes were very happy with Willie. They were content, they were safe, they were well fed, they were looked after, they had lots of perks, they were stable, they were secure. You know, you could make any kind of joke you wanted around him. You could tell Republican jokes, you could tell Democratic jokes, you could tell homosexual jokes. But you could never tell jokes about incumbents. You didn't tell incumbent jokes. Incumbent jokes were off limits.

So these people, these five guys, managed to delude themselves. And the press fed that. The press gave them a lot of coverage. They used to come out and sit and wait for the session to begin. They would come out, and they would all sit on a couple of desks in the middle of the room, and they would strike poses. I mean, it was so ridiculous. And they got to believing that they were really this fulcrum that provided the pivot point for a shift in power, and they all saw themselves moving on to greater and greater power. They probably all saw themselves as speaker. [Laughter] which was a big problem.

WOLLENBERG Well I guess another problem was that in fact at any given time Speaker Brown always had a couple of Republicans in his pocket

CONNELLY Well that was a problem [Laughter] There really were only thirty six Republicans and a couple you know he always had You know Sunny Mojonnier and Stan Statham and a couple of these others were very well looked after There were many members of the Republican caucus who made it their business to ensure that they had a foot in both camps and Willie was good at rewarding these things It wasn't always apparent but he always had a couple of people who he could count on And you know they didn't have to vote for Willie they voted for another Republican you know! [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG Just to split up the Republican vote

CONNELLY He said No for God's sake don't vote for me what are you trying to do kill me? Vote for another Republican! Just deny the forty one to any one guy As long as you have forty votes you can make all kinds of noise but you're not the speaker until you get forty one

WOLLENBERG As CAO you must have been sort of in the middle of all this

CONNELLY Well I was the guy that moved the furniture [Laughter] and looked after the staff I remember one time we had I think it was Condit's staff and Calderon's staff and they were going to file a lawsuit and they weren't going to put up with this We went down to room 113 down in one of those beautifully restored conference rooms in the first floor of the capital and Brown said I'll go with you I'll go talk to them too I tell you I'll explain to them how it is you know you win and then you lose And there are winners and there are people who are not winners There was a young man he is a lobbyist now I

can't remember his name and it wouldn't be appropriate to use it anyhow. But he already had a job being a lobbyist so he didn't think he needed Brown and he got so unpleasant so obstreperous

WOLLENBERG He was one of the staff people

CONNELLY One of the staff people who were being discharged. And he was so pugnacious about it that I went for him. [Laughter] I mean I was going to slap him! And Brown restrained me! [Laughter] [claps hands] What a world that was! And you know nothing came of it. There was nothing we could do for them. They were at will employees we were political appointees every one of us. When you know you live by the sword and you die by the sword

WOLLENBERG So what you're saying is in effect the way that Brown would punish these guys would be to reduce their staff

CONNELLY Reduce their staff

WOLLENBERG And you as the CAO would be the person who would hire and technically fire the person

CONNELLY Yes I would bring the crew in and what was an office one day for one of the dissident members the next day was part of the suite of the guy next door who was still an ally [Laughter]!

WOLLENBERG Because you as CAO would also find office space

CONNELLY I did all the office space

WOLLENBERG So in fact when the speaker said to diminish the office space of Mr. Condit you would do that

CONNELLY Yes We had eighty offices we always had eighty offices. But they varied in size and shape from year to year because it depends on which over hyperactive

committee chairman wanted to incorporate a couple offices on each side of him and make a big suite so that they could flatter their ego. But we always kept two or three really tiny offices and one of them was up on the sixth floor right next to the sixth floor cafeteria. I mean it consists of an anteroom which a desk makes crowded. And if someone is sitting in the chair they have to get up if the door opens from the hallway. And the member office is up against the dishwashing machine [Laughter] in the kitchen. So it was the least desirable office. I don't remember how many times I assigned that office at Brown's direction. I didn't do it alone he directed me. I would put somebody in there somebody who was really obnoxious [Laughter] who would settle in and boxes would be piled on top of the desk and you could hear the dishwasher going in the background [Laughter] and the clatter of the kitchen and the rest of it. Enjoy! [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG And I guess on the other hand people who were in favor with the speaker would get large offices large staffs

CONNELLY Well that was one of the earliest problems I had to deal with. The elections of '86 brought in a big contingent of new people maybe twenty eight to thirty new members. There was a tradition at that time it went on for several years after that of *massive* office renovations. We were spending three or four million dollars a year in office renovations and we had been doing this for a long time. When I came in we had a fellow who was a facilities manager who worked for me. He had been around for a long time his father had worked for us. I had known his father [Laughter]. And I began to realize that he was acting as an individual entrepreneur. When I looked carefully we didn't have a

really efficient and equitable system of asking for competitive bids and we did not have a strong contract. Although we had access to the Legislative Counsel who had to write all the contracts we did not have a good contract we did not have a comprehensive contract.

We found that what was happening was that some favored contractors would underbid the jobs once I got to them in a competitive bidding and then my facilities manager would allow them to recover substantial profits by running change orders. And when you are talking about three or four five million dollars a year there is a lot of opportunity for people to get themselves into trouble. It was very clear very early on that we needed to tighten that up. And we did succeed finally in tightening it up a couple of years later when we had an awful incident of massive theft from the assembly facilities. We were able to discharge some of these people and get them the hell out of there and get rid of some of the contractors and get rid of some of the contractors friends. [Laughter] The annex was built in 1954 and that's where most of the members worked and lived.

WOLLENBERG The annex of the Capitol

CONNELLY The annex of the Capitol. And we had facilities we had office space leased all over Sacramento. So did the senate. It was really very stupid and very expensive and very unbusiness like. But the most unbusiness like thing was that we didn't have any of the drawings of any of the buildings. That is one of the reasons these favored contractors had managed to weasel their way in because they knew the buildings so intimately. Because there were no drawings no electrical drawings no plumbing drawings no as built drawings

of anything including the \$89 or \$90 million restoration of the Capitol. They had no as built drawings. We had drawings but when we looked at them the walls were in different places. They had spent all that money and then they hadn't taken the final step which you always do in a big office building you have an architect do as built as opposed to as designed so that you know where things are. So I hired engineering students from CSUS out here

WOLLENBERG Sacramento State?

CONNELLY Sacramento State University and an engineering professor. They came down and spent a whole summer measuring all the offices. And we created with computer assisted design a set of drawings

But what was wrong with that and was dangerous about that is that the annex building was built in '54 with twenty amp services for each office. And a modern office needs 200 amps. I mean twenty amps is a joke. So there was always a very real possibility [Laughter] that we would have a serious fire in there or have a serious power failure. And we did we used to have lots of them. So I rewired the building and ran in sufficient power drilled holes in the floor and brought additional power up through the floors and all the closets

WOLLENBERG In this kind of housekeeping thing would you always get the support of the speaker?

CONNELLY Always. He had been around that building for as long as I had and he knew that the place was a shambles. So when we were making these kind of changes he would often get in he would call me at 6:00

WOLLENBERG [Laughter] 6:00 in the morning you mean?

CONNELLY No no 6:00 in the evening. Between 6:00 and 7:00. That is one of the

reasons I worked such long hours because I never knew when he was going to call. And he didn't like you to not be there when he called. And I respected that because I knew he was busy. He wasn't goofing off. He would call me and we would go for a tour. We would walk around the building. We were looking for some more office space. We were trying to squeeze some more space out of it. We were walking down on the second floor of the historic Capitol. I had gotten the General Services janitor staff to give me the keys to all the locked rooms that normally we wouldn't have access to: washrooms and storage closets.

He said, "What the hell is this one?" It is on the corner and just looking at it, you couldn't account for the space. So I found the key and we opened it. And one of the janitors had set himself up in there. There was a sink in there and he had a little wooden counter set up and he had a radio on there and he had an easy chair and a coffee pot and a heater and a radio set and a bunch of bookshelves. [Laughter] That guy must have been sleeping or reading in there; he had probably been doing it for years. He wasn't in there at the time fortunately. But it was gone the next morning. [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG [Laughter] So he was really interested in the nuts and bolts?

CONNELLY Because you know, over the years he had been in many of the offices in the capital. And he had actually memorized them; he used to drive me nuts when we would assign the offices at the beginning of each session. I would get on the phone and I would have boards set up and I would have people helping me. And it was the most chaotic. It always came out; we always covered everybody. But I used all kinds of systems to do that. But he would insist on

doing it off the top of his head and he could. He could do it off the top of his head.

WOLLENBERG And he was also supportive of you when you were dealing with this petty corruption and that sort of thing?

CONNELLY Oh yes yes. And when I finally canned this guy he went to see Brown and he said Connelly just has it in for me. He said I've worked here a long time and I'm an honest straightforward guy and he said That's not what Connelly tells me. And he told him what I told him [Laughter] about this guy. And the fellow had written a letter to every member of the legislature saying that I was a no good son of a bitch and that he was being unjustly. And a couple of members of the legislature [Laughter] are attorneys and said Well you know if you really believe that there is a process it's called a lawsuit. I never got served with any paper. The guy disappeared. What a loser.

WOLLENBERG It is interesting because clearly you are working for Willie Brown but in theory your committee chair is Tom Bane. Was there ever a problem with that?

CONNELLY Well and I'll tell you. No it wasn't. Tom and I got on really well for the first couple of years. As a matter of fact Willie called me up one time and he said What the hell are you doing to Tom Bane? I said I don't know what you're talking about Mr. Brown. I thought we were getting along. He said I have never heard Tom Bane say a nice thing about a staff person in my life. And he comes in here and he says you're an angel! I said Well I have no idea. But that did not last.

WOLLENBERG Oh [Laughter]

CONNELLY That did not last. In 1987 we were trying to reorganize. We were doing the

bill analysis and bill referral system we were changing the businesses And Bane liked that I mean he was not a very nice guy but he was not a stupid man and he knew that these things needed to happen and that they made the house very vulnerable to have these very ragged things We were spending a lot of money we had \$96 to \$102 million during the first few years annual budget That is a lot of money

WOLLENBERG That is just for the assembly?

CONNELLY Just for the assembly We had a system which still prevails whereby we the assembly and the senate neither organization has a revolving account There is no access to cash no access Every single request for a warrant the government word for a check every warrant request to pay everybody vendors staff salaries everything we paid out every single penny of it went through the Controller's Office and the Controller's Office issued the checks Many agencies of state government have revolving accounts and they are given an authority to spend \$60 \$70 \$80 million you know maybe a big agency might have a \$100 million revolving account And I never wanted to have a revolving account They call it fiduciary responsibility And the jails of California are full of people who have violated their fiduciary responsibility one way or another The best way to avoid any kind of adverse activity or publicity is to not have any money

So every once in a while someone would say Say why don't we have in Rules Committee Why don't we have a revolving account? Then we could pay ourselves during the budget strikes and we could do all these wonderful things And Brown always supported me and Bane always

supported me Bane and his wife Marlene She was the real reason that Tom Bane was the chairman of the Rules Committee Marlene did not work for us but worked for the speaker as a fund raiser She was an expert fund raiser she was a prodigious fund raiser She could make herself so obnoxious that people would buy a table at Willie Brown s fund raisers just on the premise that she wouldn t call them again That is literally true JoAnne Willie s secretary used to tell me that she would get calls from people that said Hey look I ll buy a table A table was twelve seats at ten to twelve thousand dollars a seat that is a lot of money

WOLLENBERG Right \$100 000

CONNELLY But I ll do that if and only if Marlene Bane never calls me again [Laughter]
I mean she was pitiless she was just pitiless But she was effective We would take You know the big Hollywood

WOLLENBERG Hollywood Bowl?

CONNELLY No not the Hollywood Bowl a big hotel in Hollywood what is the name of the damn thing? Whatever it was a huge place with a ballroom

WOLLENBERG The Ambassador?

CONNELLY Yes one of those big places We would have annual fund raisers usually in the spring corresponding with Brown s birthday one in San Francisco and one in Los Angeles They would raise \$1 5 million \$1 6 million When you figure that they paid \$300 000 or \$400 000 for the entertainment and the meal that is a lot of money that you are raising a couple of times a year

So she was really good at that and Tom was interested in was a little bit too interested in an organization called Monarch Monarch was a small shirttail

computer operation which had offices in the same Van Nuys building in southern California as the Tom Bane district office. Monarch was a designer, a very small scale designer who had designed a constituent software which was all the rage in the late eighties. It is very commonly used now, both houses use it. Congress uses it, most state legislatures use it.

What it does is enable a member to buy a data bank for an individual constituency or district. So when Mrs. Jones calls up, you hit Mrs. Jones on the thing, and you get a screen, and you say, "Is that Mrs. Jones on Oak Street?"

Yes. And then you see that she has called three or four times, and she is interested in abortion, she is against guns, she is for education. Then it also says, at the top of the screen it tells you the city council member representing her, her board of supervisors member, her congressman, their telephone numbers and addresses, and a lot of information. And then you write, as soon as you hang up and tell Mrs. Jones that you can't solve that problem, it is a federal problem, you hit the button, and the computer sends a letter to Mrs. Jones saying, "Thank you very much, my staff said you called today, and you were very concerned about x, y, and z. And we're carrying, here is some legislation that deals with these things. We're very anxious to let you know what is going on. I represent the people."

And they create a dialogue, and we would get another letter from Mrs. Jones. You know, if you used it right, you couldn't lose an election. Mostly members are so goddam lazy that their staffs wouldn't use this thing. But Bane wanted us to buy this Monarch system. And I was old enough to know that we didn't want to buy a single source contract, a sole source contract, with

friends of Tom Bane whose offices were interconnected down in Van Nuys
because it smelled bad

[End of Tape 8 Side A]

[Begin Tape 8 Side B]

CONNELLY Well we started off with a competitive bid we had five different vendors come in and we had the Rules Committee assemble and take a vote on the process and make a contract So it was on the up and up and Monarch didn't have the leg up then However Bane used to sell Monarch to the new members He would pressure them into taking Monarch so Monarch was and I believe still may be the principal contractor for the constituent mailing service And it always smelled to high heaven because Mrs Bane had an interest in the Monarch Corporation and at one point I believe she still had an interest in it while they were acting on their behalf up here and that is serious business The newspapers regularly took them to task for that it was not a secret and I think they just managed to skirt right on the outside of things for a long time

But it worried me and his interest in computers was principally derived from this guy Mike Schulen who owned Monarch Constituent Mail We had several issues where very bizarre things happened as a consequence of a divergence that later occurred when Tom was seeking his own interests and Schulen's interest with the purchase of assembly computer equipment Because when I first came on in '87 the Legislative Counsel Bureau was providing computer services to the assembly and the senate We divested ourselves of the superannuated 1970s equipment that Leg Counsel had saddled us with In fact I tried to sell them I tried to sell them all over a week we had

something like \$25 million on the books of costs for those things since the early seventies until 1987. I even called several central African republics where they spoke French in one case and I had to get an interpreter to see if I could sell the damn things. We had to finally pay somebody \$80,000 to haul them away. They had no value.

But we opened our own Assembly Office of Information Services, AOIS. We went to the Leg Counsel for safety reasons and because they were experts and they actually leased another \$20 million worth of stuff from Digital Equipment Company and we went into our first iteration. And DEC was ours. We went through a competitive bid. Sun Systems, Digital, IBM, there were four or five of them. It was a very painful process. Because I was not then and not now an expert in computers. But I knew something about reading contracts [Laughter]. I mean we had really carefully drawn contracts. And DEC won fair and square.

Digital came in and we built our own. We actually leased facilities, bought the equipment and operated our own small office computer system. A couple of years later we moved to a more decentralized system as desktop computers became more powerful. It was the right thing to do but the way Bane did it was very questionable. And in each case I bumped heads with him because I insisted that we have a vote of the Rules Committee. So that meant that he had to go and get Willie to bang some heads to give him the votes to do this stuff but at least we had an open public vote on the thing. So that kept me clean and it kept at least some semblance of cleanliness and honesty in these bids.

However, we were moving towards an architecture, a computer architecture.

which was desirable only to Bane and only to Bane because Schulen was writing his programs with this architecture. And you know it stank and I didn't like it and I tried to stop it. I actually tried to go to the members of the Rules Committee and did go and tell them. This stinks and it has the potential to blow up in your face and you ought to be careful about it. One of them a great liberal a wonderful human being fighter for freedom and justice and the American way had himself removed from the Rules Committee so that he wouldn't have to vote on it.

And I told Brown what I was doing. I always told him what I was doing. I would come down and call him on Saturday morning because I didn't want anyone to overhear our conversations. I would tell him you know. This stuff is dangerous stuff. He always let me work it out but he always supported me in getting it to a vote. Now Rules Committee was a peach was a plum committee. Members would stop me in the hallway never in the office because everybody believed the place was bugged. They would always stop me in the hallway and they would say Hey what's going on here? And depending on who they were [Laughter] and how much I trusted them I would tell them.

So Tom and I diverged. In 1988 we were still great buddies we were still great admirers of each other. I was less of an admirer of Tom than he was perhaps of me because I really was straight with him. And I was in a difficult position. I was really working for Willie Brown but I had to report to Tom Bane. Some people in that position might have just said Well to hell with it I'll just you know if Tom doesn't like it he can resign and somebody else can

take his job. But I didn't think that was fair. And he and I did OK. On many issues we were in sync and there was no problem.

But anyhow, the upshot was that his wife was very interested in long term Jewish politics and support for Israel. She had, for many years, and for all I know, is still doing it. I led tours to Israel, people who were in the legislature. Because many of them became congresspersons later on, and because they had already been briefed and inculcated with the Israelis' point of view. So the upshot of it was that my wife and I went to Israel on one of these legislative tours. It was a fantastic tour. We paid for Deborah's, and they got somebody to pay for me. I mean, allegedly I was inspecting water resources, and it turned out that water resources is a big problem, and it is a very interesting issue. In fact, it is the one issue that is going to blow that place apart. But it was the period of the intifada, and so we were on a bus [Laughter] a fifteen passenger bus with California Legislators posted on it.

WOLLENBERG: Wasn't that a bit dangerous?

CONNELLY: I said, "Why don't we roll that back a little bit?" [Laughter] Say the Ace Novelty Company or Sunshine Tours or something. We had a soldier with us with an AK-47 at all times, and the bus driver had a pistola stuffed in the back of his belt, and I was always trying to help [Laughter] and look around. But the way he drove, we were more likely to get killed in a traffic accident.

WOLLENBERG: [Laughter]

CONNELLY: We came back from that, and it was shortly after that that he began to think in terms of resigning, or not running again, because he was getting old and he wasn't feeling very good. He had a lot of health problems. He came into my

office and I'm trying to remember exactly when this was. Maybe it was '89 because it was '90. I think that he pulled the plug. '90. I've forgotten. It was right about that time. He said, "You know, I've been thinking a lot about what I'm going to do."

I said, "Well, Tom, you know, it's good to plan ahead, and that kind of stuff. We had that kind of relationship, we could talk." He said, "I've decided that I'm going to retire. I've got about \$400,000 in my campaign funds, and I can't take that personally. I can't take that home. It was a nice little perk for someone who had a couple million dollars sitting in there. But he said, 'What I'm going to do is, I'm going to hand pick my successor, and I'm going to give him that \$400,000 to get him started.' I said, 'Gee, that's really great. Who is it?' He said, 'You.' I said, 'Tom, are you kidding?' [Laughter] 'You can't be serious. First of all, I don't live in Van Nuys.' [Laughter] 'Secondly, I'm not interested in running for public office, it's not my thing. And you know, I need to think about this.'

He said, "I don't want you to tell Brown about this." I said, "Well, I'll keep it to myself." So I went home and I sat down with my wife and my daughter. I mean, this is unreal. I mean, now the guy has made this offer, and if I turn him down, he is *really* going to be offended. So I broke my promise to him and I called Brown. He laughed like hell. He said, "Yes, I'm not surprised. He thinks you walk on water." I said, "Well, I can't do it. I mean, I have no interest." He said, "Well, just tell him so." So the next day I broke it as gently as I could to him. [Laughter] I said, "It's an incredible offer. I'm overwhelmed, but it's just not me. I'm building the sailboat, and I want to retire, and go to the Pacific."

and all this kind of stuff So our relationship probably began to cool at that point Our bone of contention was the creation and the expansion of this Office of Information

WOLLENBERG Computers

CONNELLY Computers And it always it was always a problem It finally ended up when it got later on this would have been the late eighties or very early nineties I've just forgotten when it is he retired he wanted us to buy Sun System scientific stations My research has told us that those computers were suitable for NASA type research and development they had nothing to do with us It was way overkill they were vastly more expensive than we needed to get into And it was a different architecture so there was huge compatibility problems and transfer of data and we had huge archives and things So he had a pal here a guy named Mike Hannigan who was a failed salesman of computer printers that we met in southern California when we were looking for something or other As soon as I met that man I knew he was an incompetent fool and a crook Tom really took to him and Tom did not have a lot of colleagues I remember when Phil Isenberg who was on Rules at the time said You know you ought to have lunch with Tom every once in a while because none of the members want to have anything to do with him because he is just terrible he is just awful

So I invited him to lunch We had lunch a few times together but he wasn't social But this guy Hannigan sort of filled the void he needed a son He needed a colleague and somebody to mentor This fellow Hannigan Mike Hannigan not Tom Hannigan the member but Mike Hannigan Mike

Hannigan filled it And Mike had a girlfriend and we ended up with her on the payroll Then they got married and Tom actually performed the wedding ceremony You can do that you know I guess legislators can So he had this guy Hannigan go out and do this bogus phony report about why these Sun stations were so great And he called a meeting of Rules but there weren't any members there it was just me! [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG A one member meeting?

CONNELLY And the secretary and a bunch of staff for AOIS This guy Hannigan put on this stupid dog and pony show that was patently baloney And Tom turns to me at the end and he said Well I'm convinced let's sign the contract Bob And I said Tom I'm not signing anything And he got up and stalked out of the place I went back to the office I had kept Brown apprised of this the things that were going on I called him and I said There's a problem here He said Well just ride it out let's see what happens A little bit later Bane walked into my office in the Capitol over here [Laughter] He walked up and he had one of his stationery envelopes Tom Bane and he throws it down on my desk and he said I want you to look at this I thought you know he's fired me So I open it up it was his letter of resignation Addressed to *me*!

[Laughter] Mr Bane Tom first of all why would you resign? I mean you ought to go see the speaker if you are unhappy about this stuff He said Ah I know you and Willie are running this damn place He used to come to me all the time and say I need to get in touch with the speaker I would say Well Tom I'll give him a call but his number is listed in the San Francisco telephone directory and if you want to call him he'll answer he's more likely

to take your call than mine. He said, No, you have a secret way of doing it.

But it wasn't! All I would do is I would call up the number.

WOLLENBERG: So Brown really had a listed number?

CONNELLY: Listed in the damn telephone book. But he was convinced that Brown and I were out tripping the light fantastic. He thought we used to have lunch and dinner together and sit around a plan. I mean, he was just really a paranoid old man. So I called Brown up. I said, You know, you are really going to love this one. He just resigned, and he addressed the letter of resignation to me. And Brown just broke up.

WOLLENBERG: Did Bane stick to his resignation?

CONNELLY: A couple of days later Marlene fixed it all up at a dinner in San Francisco with Bane and Brown. She fixed it all up, and he remained the chairman. But our relationship cooled at this point.

But there were so many other things going on by now. Nobody wanted my job, you know. [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG: Before we get to the other things, who was it who took his place?

CONNELLY: John Burton.

WOLLENBERG: How did you get along with him?

CONNELLY: Not well.

WOLLENBERG: [Laughter] Without getting into great detail.

CONNELLY: [Laughter] Not well. Not well. For the same reason. He had been the chairman of Rules before. Burton had been chairman of rules in the seventies before he went to the Congress.

WOLLENBERG: Yes, and then went to Congress, then he dropped out of politics because of

drug problems

CONNELLY Yes

WOLLENBERG Now he is back in the legislature

CONNELLY Now he is back Bane doesn't run for office again and so John went around and said I want to be Rules chairman Brown called me up he called me up one day and he said I want you to discourage John Burton I want you to tell him it is different I said Well I'll be happy to do that Mr Brown But isn't that something that you ought to be doing? [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY I mean he is going to laugh at me for telling him He said No I want you to do it So I went and saw Burton I said You know it's different Brown really calls the shots and he runs the store and so it is much more of a figurehead Burton not surprisingly didn't like that very much and didn't like hearing it So our relationship was always poisoned I was always Brown's guy He didn't like me

WOLLENBERG But I thought Burton and Brown were good friends?

CONNELLY Well they were But one of the first things that happened after John Burton took over The elevators have squawk boxes in them the members elevator has squawk boxes in it so they could listen to the floor and the committee And when there is nothing going on they just play a radio station And the sergeants are all fascists and they listen to Rush Limbaugh He would be on at 10 00 in the morning and Burton would come in and he would hear Rush Limbaugh going up to his office And he came to me one day and he said Get that off there! I said Well I will I don't like Rush Limbaugh either and I

understand why you want to do it but I've got to be careful that it doesn't blow back in our face. It blew back in our face. I tried to do it as calmly and as cautiously as possible. Because it was just a sergeant down there that just tuned it in, pushes a switch. And as soon as I told him, 'Why don't we find some country and western music?' they called the local fascist press.

WOLLENBERG *The Sacramento Union?*

CONNELLY And Rush Limbaugh comes up and he says, 'John Burton in California is trying to stop free speech.' And Brown called me in, he was mad about it. He said, 'Listen, if you can't control John Burton, I'll get somebody in there who can.' I thought, 'Oh, well, that's great. I'm in control of John Burton, yes sure.'

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY So they were great buddies, but he said, 'John Burton has no judgment.' I said, 'Yes, I certainly concur.' [Laughter] with that. He said, 'You have got to stop him, and you have got to out-think him, and you have got to be there in front of him.' He said, 'I can't let him make mistakes that are going to embarrass me.' Which is, of course, for a staff guy, is a very difficult place to be.

But we had been through many wars by this time. There were political wars, and I had always taken my vacation time and worked in these campaigns, and I had done some fairly yeoman work. It usually would be the general election, and I rather than go walk precincts or go be assigned to a campaign, I would be held back. And at the time of the the Friday until the Tuesday of the general election, I would get into it, and we would often charter an airplane.

[Laughter] and take 160 of our closest friends someplace So I was in every part of the state I've walked precincts in places so many times that people thought I was a townie! [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG Just to clarify now what you're saying is that in effect in order to support his candidates

CONNELLY In order to support Democratic candidates supported by the speaker

WOLLENBERG He would get staff people on your vacation time to campaign for them?

CONNELLY Yes You would have to take vacation or else go off payroll

WOLLENBERG And that was something that was done pretty much universally

CONNELLY And I was always scrupulous about not only myself being off payroll but everybody who went had to have in my office before they left a request for vacation time or a request to go off payroll See because the press would come in the next morning on Wednesday morning the press would be there and want to see Well how come I saw this guy at How come he is on the payroll? and this kind of stuff you know

In one case in South Central Los Angeles we ran three campaigns out of one office We must have had close to three or four hundred people walking precincts over the weekend hanging doorknob door hangers and then get out the vote on Monday night and all day Tuesday And in order to feed them I would go down on a Thursday or Friday night sometimes out of my own pocket I always got reimbursed but I took a couple of thousand dollars in groceries from one of these grocery warehouse kind of things And we found a union hall usually where they had a kitchen but not always In one case we ran three campaigns and were feeding people in the parking lot of a labor union in

Los Angeles We were cooking over split oil drums and we were making lunches and cooking dinners and putting salad in great big black garbage bags and putting it in the trunks of cars and taking that so that they didn't have to come in for dinner And we would make five or six hundred a thousand sandwiches early in the morning and put lunch bags together and get them out there and we had cars running this stuff out We cooked roast beef on top of oil drums and sliced them up put them in aluminum foil and sent enough for each one and so they had french bread salad and fried chicken

WOLLENBERG This was like a military operation

CONNELLY It was a military operation This is an era when Brown used to do these annual Fourth of July picnics out here when we would have 3 500 of his closest friends that we would feed including most of the homeless in downtown Sacramento And I always cooked there too I am not a cook I do not like cooking I am not a gourmet chef but I can move shoot and communicate When we started feeding big numbers of people at campaigns And I was well known for it In fact people used to want to go and work in my campaigns because I always saw to it that they got good food You know I was a soldier at one time and I knew that a good officer saw that the troops fed first the troops fed first then the officers First the horses then the troops then the officers [Laughter]

And so I always ran those campaigns the same way And people appreciated it because it's awful work to go out and work in a canvassing It's terrible it's boring your feet are sore at the end of the day you're tired and if you had something decent to eat and not some damn stale donut or a

hamburger from Taco Loco or Poco whatever the hell those things are called

WOLLENBERG I think everybody assumes that the way that Brown would help people in campaigns was money And of course he did raise prodigious amounts of money

CONNELLY Oh yes

WOLLENBERG but you're saying in addition to money you really did retail politics you really would go out there on the streets

CONNELLY His staff oh yes many of the staff would go off payroll for six months and would be assigned to a campaign They would go out and actually run the campaign They would be in telephonic contact with Brown every day And he controlled the books He and the woman who is now the chief of staff of San Francisco I can't think of her name It was Eleanor Eleanor Johns Eleanor Johns was in his law office in San Francisco and she was actually keeping the books and the money was distributed for everything I mean we had houses printing houses all over the state where you could go into them on an hour's notice and we could get 50,000 pieces of mail by the next morning We many many times would throw the stuff in the back of a car and drive halfway across the state because it has got to have a local post mark on it [Laughter] It doesn't look good if it comes from Los Angeles or Sacramento or San Francisco

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY So you would do a drop with the local post office So you got to be pretty conversant with postal codes [Laughter] and you knew a lot of postal folks around the world So we knew a lot about printing we knew a lot We were

very very good I mean his staff was as good as it gets in that area

Sometimes we worked in conjunction with the senate I remember one big campaign for Senator Greene he was a Democrat who was running in a special election in the spring of the year Special elections were traditional losers for Democrats because Democrats won't come out for special elections

WOLLENBERG Right conservatives tend to vote more often

CONNELLY And Republicans are more likely to vote So we were in some suburb of Los Angeles some godforsaken place and I knocked on doors The places where they have the steel doors and windows barred off and you get scared You had to learn to stand back far enough from the door so that you could be seen in the surveillance equipment And it looked like we were going to lose And I think it was Richie Ross but I am not sure it was Richie I think it was Richie Ross who said Well let's do a door hanger with a giveaway

WOLLENBERG Richie Ross the political consultant who was running most of Brown's campaign

CONNELLY Right He was often the mastermind of all of them and had a subset of his and Brown's staff out there The idea was you can't buy a vote It is illegal to buy a vote But we offered a dozen donuts we put a door hanger out It said you bring your voter receipt to any one of these locations around the district and you get a free dozen donuts We gave away twenty two to twenty five thousand dozen donuts Now you can't give them to just Republicans you have to give them everybody But it was the thing that brought enough Democrats out and we won that election with 25 000 dozen donuts Jesus

WOLLENBERG That was the donut election

CONNELLY The donut election

WOLLENBERG [Laughter] Well that brings us to one of the most serious issues you had during that time the FBI investigation

CONNELLY Oh yes

WOLLENBERG That was occurring for much of the latter part of the 1980s

CONNELLY Well the investigation actually began in 1985 I happen to know that because in preparation for our session today I got the request for a search warrant a public document that was used to conduct a search of the Capitol on the night of August 30 of 1988 at about 9 00 P M

WOLLENBERG Maybe we ought to back up and get some background on how we got to an FBI investigation

CONNELLY Right Many people believe and I think it s probably true that the FBI was out to get Willie Brown to nail him He was an obstreperous ostentatious outrageous and black legislator who made a career out of thumbing his nose at convention and it had hurt him along his career many times And ultimately I believe was largely responsible for the passage of Proposition 130

WOLLENBERG The term limits

CONNELLY Term limits But in this investigation they got authorization from the then director of the FBI who was the successor to J Edgar Hoover and I ve forgotten who it was now [William Webster] But anyhow they set up a sting And I often wondered if it was that damn Robert Redford movie that gave them the idea [Laughter]

But they created a phony corporation it was called Gulf Shrimp and ostensibly they needed special legislation here in California to move their

operations from the Gulf Coast to California and they needed some kind of tax advantage which they would get through the small business administration as I remember I'm a little hazy on the details They contacted a man who was somebody that Willie Brown knew a black man I think his name was Freeman He put them in touch with Gwen Moore and Gwen Moore's office put them in touch with Pat Nolan

WOLLENBERG Pat Nolan was an assemblyman

CONNELLY Assemblyman and Gwen she was a black assemblywoman from southern California Her staff a guy name Tyrone Netters carried the issue to the senate Paul Carpenter and his staff guy whose name was John Schabian it's an Armenian name Schabian

WOLLENBERG Schabian?

CONNELLY S c h a b i a n or something like that Who was an attorney and should have known better They set up this game whereby they were going to pass this special legislation And the FBI contacted the staff and the members impersonating businessmen They came in undercover They got payments they made payments very substantial Well not very substantial \$1 500 \$2 000 \$2 500 the total I think of the whole scam was \$40 000 or \$50 000 and it was spread over two years because the bill was vetoed the first year What nobody knew at the time [Laughter] was that the governor [George] Deukemejian was in on it and he knew it was a scam

WOLLENBERG He knew that the FBI was running a sting?

CONNELLY The FBI had informed him so the damn thing didn't actually end up becoming law So he knew but nobody else knew Now how he managed that with his

Republican colleagues a couple of whom went to prison is another story But the bill died the first year they reintroduced it the second year AB 4203 which is the number of the Senate Finance Hearing Room I was always able to remember the bill I always thought that was a nice touch They were moving towards the moment when they were going to grab everybody They had already turned this Schabian and Schabian was walking around here carrying a wire For months everybody walked around talking into their sleeves as a joke But it wasn't funny He tape recorded a lot of people and people just got terribly paranoid got terrified because they knew after the fact when it all came out then they were really terrified because [Laughter] they remembered talking to Schabian and to Senator Robbins who also carried a wire

WOLLENBERG Senator Alan Robbbins?

CONNELLY Al Robbins yes Alan what a character he was Anyhow it was getting close to the point where they were going to start making arrests and the FBI contacted a woman named Karen Watson Pat Nolan was the leader in the Republican caucus at the time Ironically Pat Nolan had gone to the FBI a couple of years before complaining about Willie Brown and claiming that there were irregularities in his fund raising and that he was selling votes which is a felony It is a very serious business It was ironic because Pat Nolan went to prison But Karen Watson was the Republican caucus staff person who was regarded herself as the chief fund raiser and the *facto* *factotum* and the go to gal if you wanted to get legislation moved

WOLLENBERG In the Republican caucus?

CONNELLY In the Republican caucus She used to hang out at a place called The Brass Rail right on the other side of the capital there on 11th and L Street It was one of the reasons I never went into there First of all the drinks were crappy the food was inedible and you always ran into people like [Laughter] Karen Watson and these really third rate lobbyists hanging around the bar there at 7 00 at night I could never understand it But she liked to talk and she talked so much that she had come to the FBI's attention They called her in They had already turned Schabian and they were looking for someone to turn state's evidence or whatever the federal equivalent [Laughter] of state's evidence is And they gave her the quintessential offer she couldn't refuse They were going to give her immunity in return for her testimony And she told them to I quote Go fuck yourself Now this was probably the dumbest thing that any staff person has ever done in recorded history

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY She recognized the people she thought were Alabama or Mississippi businessmen were now wearing FBI tags on their coats and she knew that there was big trouble afoot She was very confused She went back to Nolan and told him what had happened

WOLLENBERG This is Pat Nolan

CONNELLY Pat Nolan This was all in the course of one day

[End of Tape 8 Side B]

[Begin Tape 9 Side A]

WOLLENBERG We were talking about the FBI scam

CONNELLY And Karen Watson

WOLLENBERG And Karen Watson

CONNELLY Unfortunate Karen Well Karen went to Pat Nolan the chairman of the Republican caucus and told him that the FBI had revealed their investigation to her and asked her to cooperate she had told them to go stuff it And that she wanted protection and she wanted legal counsel His reaction was to fire her and he had the Rules Committee fire her It was really bizarre We actually had a meeting not that day but a little later But it was in August it was on the 30th of August

WOLLENBERG This is 1988 now?

CONNELLY 1988 We were in session and it was 9 00 at night The sergeants came in to my office

WOLLENBERG The sergeants?

CONNELLY Sergeant of arms from the basement They said There are thirty FBI agents in the building and they have a search warrant I said What in the hell are you talking about? Because this is the first time I had even heard of it I didn't know anything about the shrimp scam or any of this stuff So I called the senate sergeants and they said Yes they are over here and they are in a couple of offices Senator Carpenter's office Then the governor's office called me they said The FBI was up here looking for keys to the office I said [Laughter] Well don't the FBI know that you don't have keys to our office? They said No they were a little bit confused

I said Well what's it all about? They said We don't know There are fifteen or twenty of them Actually there were thirty And they were pushing these little wheeled carts for evidence gathering and they had bags and bags of

plastic evidence bags and they had search warrants. But I didn't know where they were because they hadn't come to see me. So I went and got the Leg Counsel Bion Gregory and he had heard about it too but he didn't know any more than I did. So he went out on the floor and Brown was sitting on the floor was in his desk on the assembly floor and we came up. And I don't know if we were the first ones that told him or not but he was ashen. I mean it was he knew it was *very* serious. I don't know how much he knew about it but he knew it was very serious. The FBI in the Capitol of California with search warrants and you've got a pretty serious matter on your hands.

So I finally found out which offices they were in and I got Leg Counsel deputies to go to those offices to check the search warrants first of all to see if they were appropriate. You know because a search warrant is supposed [Laughter] to have some specificity to it.

WOLLENBERG Right

CONNELLY I think that has something to do with the First and the Fourth Amendments [Laughter] And they were all in order. But what they did contain was references as to which offices they are going to search and also where they are by reference to other members that they are next to this member and across the hall from this member. So a lot of members that were mentioned in the search warrant had nothing to do with this thing.

WOLLENBERG They just happened to have an office next door to somebody

CONNELLY Just happened to have an office next to someone. So the press heard about the search warrants and the press were all over it. I mean every television camera in Sacramento was there.

WOLLENBERG Was Speaker Brown's office one of the ones they searched?

CONNELLY No. No, it wasn't. [Laughter] And neither was my office one of the ones that they searched. Because all they would have found was our bill files. And in the bill files some people were very foolish and they left some things that would best have been redacted. I think was the term we used. [Laughter] I think there were four or five assembly offices and three or four senate offices that were actually searched and the search went on most of the night.

As I came out of the chambers after telling Brown about it, I encountered Tom Bane in the hallway. His office was in that hallway right by the back door of the chamber. He was walking; he had gone out to go to the bathroom or something. He walked up to me. I guess we were friends at that time; he put both hands on my shirt and he said, "How are you, Bob?" You know, it is 10:00-9:30 at night. I said, "Well, not so good." I said, "The place is crawling with FBI agents and they've got search warrants." Without a word he spun on his heel, he walked back to his office and I followed him. He walked back into his office, opened his private office, picked up a briefcase which was behind his desk, walked out. Never said another word to me. Walked out of the hallway, went down and walked down the stairwell. Never, never did Tom Bane use the stairwell. I looked out through the grating because it's an outside stairwell and I saw him walking towards K Street in the dark with the briefcase. [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG [Laughter] You never asked him what was in there.

CONNELLY I never asked what was in there. I sort of assumed it was something that he wasn't planning on having the FBI find.

WOLLENBERG Was his office one of the ones ?

CONNELLY No his office was not searched

WOLLENBERG Of course he didn't know that at the time

CONNELLY No He didn't know that at the time We didn't know what they were after

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY By morning it was the story *du jour* all over every newspaper And the press wanted copies of the search warrants and I wouldn't give them to them I said Well first of all you want a copy the FBI issued them go to the FBI They said Well they won't give them to us I said Well they name people in it who have nothing to do with the investigation It would not be fair because that will show up on a political hit piece yes sure as hell that they were involved in the sting Sure their office was next to one of the people who were indicted that's their kind of problem So I wouldn't do it So the press really came down they said You're a jerk and a fascist and you know just awful That was part of the job

And it got worse We got lots of subpoenas from the federal government We literally rented a van I mean we were renting Ryder vans long before anybody else was renting [Laughter] And we took literally tons of documents payroll documents committee files bill files every possible thing and we catalogued it it was an enormous job They asked us for everything not once made these requests not once but two or three times Finally I said What are you guys doing with this stuff? I mean we've already given you this We misplaced it

So we were hauling stuff down the street to the federal office building down

there in the federal court building on Capitol Avenue. And I got on a first name basis with representatives in the criminal investigation division [Laughter] of the Internal Revenue Service, lots of FBI agents. My personal office was right inside the doorway. So I would often have two or three press people sitting in the anteroom, and maybe an FBI guy and an IRS guy. I thought, You know, we don't want these guys too chatty out there.

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY So that is when I built my office out on the top of the atrium so I could get my own stuff there and we could change the waiting room. So we actually physically changed the office. This went on for a long time. And the FBI would call me up and say, You can't tell anybody about these subpoenas for documents. You can't tell anybody. I said, Well, that's not what our attorneys tell me. They said, Well, if you reveal that we subpoenaed this stuff, we're going to bring charges against you. I said, I had already been advised by the counsel that that wasn't true. And it wasn't true [Laughter] because they never came against me. Now you know, not too often do you want to be sassing the IRS or the FBI [Laughter]. It got to the point where it was ridiculous. It went on and on and on, and it got awful, and members did go to jail.

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY And people that I liked, and people [Laughter] that I didn't care as much about but were part of a legislative family, staff people, got themselves in very serious trouble, lost their jobs, lost everything, and ended up in some cases in jail. Wrecked their lives.

WOLLENBERG The great irony though was that apparently it was all started by Pat Nolan against Willie Brown

CONNELLY trying to drop a dime on Willie Brown

WOLLENBERG And Pat Nolan ends up one of the people in jail

CONNELLY And he ends up in jail He was a young relatively young man I think he was still in his thirties at the time He was a big bluff Irishman Hail fellow well met you know And I was sorry because he was sort of a decent guy Ideologically we were miles apart But I hated to see it happen he had a nice family and wife and kids It just all turned very very very bad

WOLLENBERG And he and Brown had actually worked together in getting the process working

CONNELLY They had a good relationship and they had a productive relationship But it all came tumbling down There was never any question of Brown being involved I mean because he wasn't [Laughter] But the people that got themselves into that trouble had to be I mean they were so dumb When you read this request for the search warrant which contains much of the evidence detailed evidence and who said what to whom when They were sitting in a restaurant having breakfast and everybody in the restaurant was wearing a blue suit a white shirt and narrow tie and had a briefcase up on top of the table with what looked like a camera lens sticking out I mean [Laughter] you don't have to see very many movies before I mean that's what they did

And in one case they photographed people in the Hyatt Regency or maybe it was the Hotel Senator but I think it was the Regency They would set up a room and the FBI bored holes in the wall and put these cameras in And

there's one picture of a member stuffing bills stuffing money into his pockets
 I mean you know you can't cheat an honest man and people who get
 themselves into those kind of messes you know have been working on it for a
 long time This isn't the first time they've done something like that And it
 came home in a big way to roost
 [tape interruption]

CONNELLY Well there was a tailpiece on this story A couple of years later I was in my
 office one morning and my secretary buzzed me and said there was a vendor
 out here in the anteroom I said Well you know Kay I don't talk to vendors
 Send them over to facilities She said No you'll know this one So I came
 out and here [Laughter] is Karen Watson The same Karen Watson late of the
 Republican caucus and just out of jail a single mother looking after her
 youngster and she was selling office equipment [Laughter] And she wanted
 to know whether she could make a presentation I said Karen you're talking
 to the wrong guy [Laughter] You're talking to the wrong guy

[End of Interview]

[Session 4 August 1 2001]

[Begin Tape 10 Side A]

WOLLENBERG fourth interview with Bob Connelly

Bob last time we talked about the FBI investigation the fact that it came up with a few members of the legislature who were indicted and convicted including Pat Nolan the guy who started the whole thing But Willie Brown who was probably the original target got off scot free But in spite of that Willie Brown probably over his term as speaker must have raised tens of millions of dollars in campaign contributions from special interest groups from corporations and unions and lobbyists They must have wanted a return on their investment they must have wanted a tit for their tat How do you make that distinction between corruption and business as usual?

CONNELLY Well of course you re right During the years of his speakership he regularly raised \$4 to \$6 or \$7 million a year as the speaker and used that as a means of centralizing his power because the individual chairpersons of the committees did not raise money at the same rate that he did

He preferred it that way He wanted to be the focal point for fund raising because that gave him the power to dictate how the money was spent and

who got it of course You know there is always one speaker and seventy nine applicants for the job and many of them thought that they could do a better job than Willie I don't know of anybody who ever demonstrated any capacity [Laughter] beyond his Brown was very careful too He used to work out in the law office down on Capitol Avenue when he was raising money because it is of course inappropriate and in fact a felony to do so in the Capitol He kept the fund raising separate Now I never was actually present while he was raising money I mean I was at many of his fund raising dinners but of course no one was so gauche as to talk about [Laughter] money at that point

Yes I suspect that he made promises but as I said earlier on one of the other tapes you know Willie was a genius at making everybody who attended a meeting feel that they had won every point and then some left with a good feeling and an aura of good feeling which usually lasted until they got over to the airport while they sat down and figured out what exactly he had said or promised to them

Because the Third House is a bunch of brokers I mean the lobbyists are a bunch of brokers They are representing the interests of a lot of industries Some of them are single industry people Some like big oil companies or something like that might have their own But many lobbyists are contract lobbyists and they represent four or five or six or twenty big clients So it is all part of an orchestrated form of hyperbole

They had to be careful They would make representations to their clients that they had access and they could get a bill amended or they could stop a

bill or they could introduce anything they wanted. And Willie knew that knew that they were really middlemen. Although under the FPPC rules it is not legal for a lobbyist [Laughter] to actually focus the money. But it is all very squishy and it is back away from the edge of viewability so you know who knows.

God knows what he told them that he would or could do for them. He probably always put caveats in. And there were lots of them that were mad at him. There was a lot of hard feelings in the Third House against Willie that they would accuse him of hyperbole and accuse him of double dealing and promising the same thing to three different people all of whom happened to have [Laughter] diametrically opposing views.

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY That is the art of politics. That goes back to Caesar Borgia and all twelve of the Roman emperors following Caesar Augustus and I am sure that it was a practice on the Peloponnese three or four hundred years before the birth of Christ. So that is nothing new. God knows the FBI made plenty of efforts to catch him to lay traps for him and they didn't.

There was never even the hint of an indictment never. They never searched his office. They did search offices in the Capitol as we have seen in the past. But Brown always stayed a hop skip and I shouldn't say a hop skip and a jump ahead of them. He always knew more about the law than the law enforcement people did themselves. I think. He kept himself informed.

The Fair Political Practices Law changes annually it moves it shoots it wiggles it turns it twists. There are interpretations that you have to be aware

of He had people who stayed very close to the FPPC and would sometimes go down and lobby for an interpretation or a change or something like that So he knew what he could and couldn't do

He didn't want to be bothered with an indictment I mean that was the end of everything if he got himself indicted I mean he couldn't be speaker for twenty minutes for five minutes after something like that happened So it was never in his interest to go walking close to the edge I am sure he was always pretty far back from the edge

I don't know that I don't know how he did it but I know that he could do favors like the air bag thing that we talked about earlier When the automobile industry was faced with a requirement either beef up the strength of the automobiles or introduce air bags and he carried legislation to introduce air bags in California I'm glad he did it was a proactive thing to do and air bags are a good thing to do Probably a stronger automobile would have been [Laughter] a good thing to do too

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY But that is one of those cases that illustrates that he would find the least objectionable side of a thing and he would move on it

But he raised a lot of money there's no question of it

WOLLENBERG I guess the one incident that got a lot of publicity particularly when he was running for mayor was his advocacy on behalf of tobacco companies

CONNELLY Oh yes

WOLLENBERG At one point at least there was a provision that gave them a certain amount of legal immunity I don't know the specifics of it

CONNELLY Well to tell you the truth I don't remember the specifics of that one either. Yes he could have put something like that in. I mean the Third House's interest in legislation is as we have already discussed usually negative. They usually want to stop things. They want to take things out they want to hold the status quo and they want to dissuade or discourage people from making any changes which makes their life more complicated. And the Third House the lobbyists are not above *generating* controversies which they then solve for their clients.

I mean that is the old almost certainly apocryphal story of the Coca Cola bill which was supposed to have been introduced at some time in the distant past probably before the Second World War when the lobbyists generated the notion through the newspapers that Coca Cola contained lead tetraethyl which was the same additive that you put in gasoline and this is what gave it its kick. Then the industry went crazy of course because they didn't want that. And they got somebody to introduce a bill saying that it was illegal for soft drinks to contain lead tetraethyl. Then the lobbyists allegedly went back to their principals. Hey this is a terrible thing for you we've got to squash this and kill this we can't let this bill pass. And you know it probably never happened it is one of these wonderful stories.

But it is the kind of thing that lobbyists do. They do generate as we learned that the press sometimes generates an issue.

WOLLENBERG Sure

CONNELLY And then it has a life of its own and needs to be amended. So if your charge as speaker was to keep things from happening that wasn't very hard to do.

First of all on a good day it is hard to get a quorum over here of members. The members are totally irresponsible about attending to meetings and hearings of the committees. And one of the reasons I suspect that there is not more discipline imposed on the members by speakers and pro tems is that the smaller the committee the smaller the quorum the smaller the vote. You have to have one more than half of the members present. But the smaller the group you are dealing with the easier it is to manage. A lot of times you could schedule a bill you could hype it you could do all kinds of things go into the meeting and the author might on the side tell his colleagues Hey kill this turkey for me. But I'm carrying the flag.

He would come in and he would make an impassioned speech on behalf of his issue and pound the podium and bring up his platoons of witnesses and it was all a charade. Not always but it sometimes was. Then one of the guys would get up and go to the bathroom or somebody would disappear you wouldn't have a quorum or you would put the vote over until after dinner if it was a late afternoon meeting and not enough people came back and you never got a quorum. So it sort of dribbles out and at 9:30 at night everybody is tired and The hell with it and walked off. I'm sure there was a lot of that you know mostly if the Third House was carrying tax issues or business advantage issues or competition issues.

About [Laughter] I don't know what percentage but some percentage of the time they would get it wrong! I mean they would get an issue inserted into a bill and it turns out it doesn't do what they thought it would do. Now that often happened. It's very hard to read legislation. You know most of the

professional lobbyists I mean we can stipulate that they know how to read legislation But their clients don't So [Laughter] a lot of times the client would get some attorney in Beverly Hills to write an amendment then get in a lobbyist And the lobbyist would say Well you know your amendment doesn't do what you think it does I mean we often passed bills that didn't do what we thought they did or did something that we didn't anticipate And that's why so many times you had the same issue over year in and year out There are things that if you went through that precedent based computer generated bill assignment thing you would find many times the same code section gets hit two or three times every year because they are still trying to get it right

WOLLENBERG Still trying to make up for what they messed up before

CONNELLY That's right And of course a great deal of legislation originates with the executive branch of government The agencies send bills in We used to call them comma changers And sometimes that's what they did they changed the comma [Laughter] But you know if you have ever parsed a sentence you can change the meaning of a sentence by moving or inserting a comma So we did a tremendous amount of that And sometimes the lobbyists would find one of those turkeys floating around early in the year because those get introduced and the agency sends them to the governor's office The governor's office approves them allows them to be introduced They don't say they'll sign them they'll allow them to be introduced

So they are in print by February March of any given year So the lobbyists leaf through them If they find something that they think affects

their clients or their principals they shoot them an urgent alert you know

This is going to change the world the roof is going to fall in the ceilings will collapse your trucks will have to stop Anyhow it is rarely true It is true that nobody or very few people know what goes on in the Capitol especially if you get more than four blocks away from the Capitol in Sacramento

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY That is why the press doesn't cover the Capitol anymore there is hardly any full time reporters in the Capitol compared with what there once was They bring a truck up and park it on the lawn whenever they think it's worth turning a television camera on But it's not very interesting to very many people So we do things that on cold hard analysis [Laughter] don't make a lot of sense And that has always been the case

WOLLENBERG A lot of people spend a lot of time at that

CONNELLY You know in the old days the grocery stores used to lean a broom against the counter Every time somebody came through they would charge them for the broom If anybody said Well what's this broom on my bill? Oh I thought that was yours And at the end of the day they would put it back It was called selling the broom

I think that selling the broom is what happened with the legislation I think that is the way Brown raised money He sold that broom a lot of times I mean I remember one time when we were in a drought in the early eighties before I was CAO The California Water Law says to major contractors like these bigwigs down the valley here that are growing cotton in the desert out here that in a drought year the Department of Water Resources reserves the

right to reduce the allocation. It's in the contract [Laughter] it's in the Resources Code. It's in the Water Code. [Laughter] I mean, that should have been no surprise.

And he called me up one morning and he said, Connelly, I want you to come down and meet with some people from agriculture. So I went down and it was a phalanx of water attorneys for these big agricultural outfits. Well, I'm not an attorney. I know something about the water law, and I knew that issue, and as soon as they started talking, I knew what it was all about. They actually thought that he was going to give them some kind of a hall pass so that they would be able to get the full amount of water that they thought they were entitled to under their contract, and would have been entitled to if there hadn't been a drought. We spent the whole morning, and finally he got up. We spent a couple of hours, and finally he got up and said, Well, you guys take Connelly to lunch, and I want you to solve it by 1:00.

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY So we went over to the Sutter Club, we got over there. I said, Gentlemen [Laughter] you know, I don't want to have lunch on you under false pretenses. We can't fix this. You guys signed a contract, it is the law. There is no question, there is a drought, and you're not going to get the water. We may as well all go on and get a hamburger. So I think you know, they had access, all the attorneys marched around in a circle, we met in the conference room.

The panoply of power, you know, people can say, I have a meeting with the speaker today. God, I don't know how many people dined out on that.

you know Well I had meetings with the speakers a lot [Laughter] but I didn't get any free lunches

WOLLENBERG They could go back to their clients and say Well we met with the speaker

CONNELLY Absolutely The speaker spent two hours with us in the conference room he put all calls on hold And you know he was a great showman at that too I mean there was a little bamboozling going on But they didn't get their water [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG But I guess it was the image of the wheeling and dealing the money and all that That was part of what explains Proposition 140

CONNELLY Oh yes

WOLLENBERG which passed in 1990 and established term limits

CONNELLY That's right Well you know Willie didn't do that all by himself but he was a principal player

WOLLENBERG By doing it you mean being the symbol of the problem ?

CONNELLY He would do press conferences We used to when he first became speaker and Bobby Metzger was his press officer and later when he had other press officers They would have a Tuesday morning press conference They would have it either in the Rules Committee room which is right behind the chambers or in his conference room

He would feed them like crazy I mean they would have hot hors d'oeuvres and crackers and cheese and Cokes and coffee or coffee cakes There would be enough food in there to feed you know the homeless down here It was a free for all They could ask him anything and it was all on the record And that is where a lot of that stuff came from He would shoot from

the hip and he would get into an entertainment mode. I mean, I was in there with him a couple of times and I just couldn't believe he was saying some of these things because he knew they weren't true and the press corps knew they weren't true. But he was kidding them. Then they would report it and if you weren't there, you didn't know [Laughter] that he had his tongue in his cheek. And the image that came out of that was that he is a wheeler dealer that he is a crook. That he is a hop, skip, and a jump ahead of the cops and one of these days a posse is going to arrive and they are going to arrest everybody. And it was never true. And he couldn't resist doing that. He could not resist doing that.

WOLLENBERG: I mean, do you think of Proposition 140 as a kind of "Get Willie Brown"?

CONNELLY: Oh, sure. I think there was a lot of that. Then, you know, there were two propositions at that time. There was another proposition that would have been far less draconian in terms of term limits. I believe it let the assemblymen have eight years or twelve years, something like that. It was much less harsh and it didn't take the pensions away and it didn't impose term limits.

He, for a long time, he refused to take 140 seriously. He didn't think that he had to. Then they cobbled together the other proposition. I've forgotten what it was, 142 or 138. And people, the opposition to that, used Willie's attitude and Willie's public persona to say, "This is why this is wrong, this is an end run, this sabotages our effort." And you recall, there was an enormous nationwide enthusiasm for term limits at the time. And you had the local crazies out here, Kople and the Gann people, who were very fond of this idea. You know, it's easy to get people angry, especially when you're dealing with

a black guy I mean California is not that far out of the Stone Age

WOLLENBERG So you think some of this was a matter of racism?

CONNELLY Oh you bet it was racism Yes And I m surprised that Willie used the race card as infrequently as he did because he certainly could have if he had wanted to I think people would see him on television and he would be seen with young attractive white women he would be dressed to the nines he would always manage to get himself photographed at the Academy Awards you know this kind of stuff And it just grates on people I mean I just figured it was his persona that s what he did you know I mean it would bore me to go and sit for four hours and watch the Academy Awards [Laughter] In fact I would regard that as a punishment really or something But he thought it was neat He sought the limelight It s addictive you know All people who are in public office and in show business and there is a very thin line dividing the two kinds of personality become addicted to it they need it I mean I worked for members who would have a sick headache they would have indigestion they would have a sore toe and they weren t going to go to the damn fund raiser And we get there they would walk out on stage and there would be a round of applause and their back would straighten up and their voice would deepen and their arm would go up I mean it is just like a narcotic

WOLLENBERG It s like a tonic

CONNELLY Yes It s a narcotic And Brown had a heavy addiction to public adulation and public appearance and public spectacle He loved it The things in the park out here the Fourth of July picnics that he did every year from the early

eighties until I left in '95. On the Fourth of July we would set up cooking facilities and we would feed 3,500 sometimes most of the homeless in downtown Sacramento all of the state workers around here who were still here at 5:30-6:00 at night the staff all the Third House. Every year the governor would come out the members would come out to the thing. We would have free beer free Cokes free hamburgers tri tips. I used to cook all the time for these things. I don't know how I always got into cooking. I hate cooking but I was a cook. We would everybody would sit down and rub elbows and the staff would rub elbows. The Third House loved it because

WOLLENBERG They had multiple access

CONNELLY The savvy Third House guy knows that the key to getting access to a member's office is not Willie Brown it's knowing the secretary. If you don't know the secretary and you haven't done some preliminary work. You know we used to see more See's Candy in that building at Christmas time. I mean it was zut heaven because there was so much candy and cookies chocolate chip cookies. There were stores around here that lived on the lobbyists purchase of candy. I mean the adipose tissue additions were extraordinary. But that is what really it comes down to it is your association with the staff. Now as staff if you are in a key position you have to report all of that stuff. And you know ten dollars a month is what you have to report

WOLLENBERG Even a bag of cookies?

CONNELLY Well a bag of cookies over ten dollars

WOLLENBERG If you had enough during the month

CONNELLY Enough during the month it would certainly do it because [Laughter] they were a buck a piece as I recall But it was that kind of thing that is what the Third House did And sometimes you know Third House lobbyists [Laughter] married staff I mean not to get access [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG Right

CONNELLY But I mean it is a closed corporation it is a closed world And if you don't know anything about the assembly desk or moving the amendments all this arcane terminology that means nothing to the outsider why should it But it is the daily grist of the mill inside and so people would love to go to these things

WOLLENBERG You know the way the outside can impinge upon this is through the initiative process And Prop 140 comes in

CONNELLY That's right

WOLLENBERG and it sets what a six year term limit for assembly members and eight year for state senators

CONNELLY That's right

WOLLENBERG What does that do to the institution? How does that change the institution?

CONNELLY Well I regard it as an unmitigated disaster I think that the evidence of a dispassionate observer ever since would concur with that view It passed in November of 1990 It passed handily too so there was no question there was a mandate there Brown's initial reaction to it was denial we weren't going to pay any attention to it I knew that wasn't going to work [Laughter] so we

began right away with our plan because the impact would not hit until the following July 1. That is when it took effect.

WOLLENBERG: That is when the six years term limit began to apply.

CONNELLY: The end of the fiscal year. Among the components in order to discourage people from staying for a long time, they took away the members' retirement system, access to the retirement system. And it also substantially reduced the annual budget appropriation for operation of the legislature. I mean, our budget in 1991 went from \$98 million down to \$68 million.

WOLLENBERG: So it took about a third off.

CONNELLY: About a third off.

WOLLENBERG: And that was written right into the proposition as well.

CONNELLY: That's right. There was a formula for the appropriation. When we worked the formula out, we took about a \$30 million hit. That meant that a third of everything had to go, and it did, in one way or another.

But the worst part about Proposition 140 and term limits was that it guarantees that you always have a bunch of freshmen legislators. I mean, they get thirty-two, thirty-four, thirty-six new members every two years, so there is no continuity. Nobody knows how anything works. And because they change their staff, their personal staff, the staff doesn't perform with continuity. The committee staff is changing rapidly. There are still people here who were here when I left in '95, but very few. For the most part, they are very new at it.

There is no textbook, there is no way to study this stuff. I mean, you just have to pick it up by being there and osmosis. And members, I mean, the first thing that they do when they get to Sacramento is start raising money for

their next election because they know they are going to need \$400 000 \$500 000 \$800 000 Many elections go over \$1 million some of them have even gone to \$2 million Well divide 104 weekends in a two year term into \$800 000 and you ve got to peddle a lot of rubber chicken and that is what you have got to do all day long Dialing for dollars they call it

So the paramount preoccupation and a huge amount of time is devoted to raising money That was always true but it is more true now because they came in on a fluke and there is somebody biting at their coattails right behind them They have no record they have not built up a machine in their district to sustain them And that is partly what the proposition what 140 was all about they didn t want machine politics they didn t want long term politics But at the same time it s like if you are going to have Roto Rooter come out and clean your plumbing you kind of hope the guy driving that red truck has done it before

WOLLENBERG Has done it a few times

CONNELLY And has some grasp of the essentials of that trade And this trade of being a legislator is complex For some used car dealer or insurance salesman or even some local government person coming up here even if they were in a city council or a county board of supervisors seat they probably don t have any kind of idea about the magnitude and complexity of state government They can make mistakes and they do make mistakes

The last budget cycle was an example of people who were not clear on the concept [Laughter] that were stumbling around in the dark bumping into each other And I think this year s energy crisis is another factor In 1996

there wasn't anybody around. Many of the members were gone because it was four years after the Prop 130 passed. You were getting away from people that had some experience, some savvy, some idea of the way things really work and happen. And you had legislation that got dumped on them in the last days of the session, and everybody voted for the damn thing. It really that is a tragedy. Either there wasn't anybody on staff who was ringing the bell, the alarm bell, or there was no member, no senior member who had been there long enough to say, 'You know, there is no reason to do this this year. There is no imperative on it. We don't know what is in this bill, we don't know what it does, we have no idea. Why don't we just sit on our hands? Put both hands under your butt and don't do anything.' And sometimes that's the best thing to do, and wait until next year.

The imperative of December, or of September, August or September, the end of a session, often evaporates by January. It is not on the horizon. Maybe, if there had been more time, and more energy, and more intelligence and experience at the front end of that thing, they wouldn't have gotten to that point. Somebody would have seen what the heck you were doing by half-deregulating a major utility operation. It made no sense then, and it was clear that it made no sense. But there was nobody who stood up and said, 'Hey, this doesn't make any sense.' Everybody voted for the damn thing.

WOLLENBERG: Term limits obviously make it impossible for there ever to be another Willie Brown, to ever accumulate that much power.

CONNELLY: Sure. Well, the power of fund-raising went. It has now devolved to the chairmen of the committees, and the individuals. It has made them very

competitive. It makes the members cautious. It makes chickens out of them because they are afraid they're going to do something to offend one of their major donors and so they keep veering away from anything. I mean, you're not going to see an FPFC reform or you're not going to see a Wild and Scenic Rivers. You're not going to see major legislation dealing with natural resources. You will never see a resolution of the water problem here in California and it's not like it has gone away [Laughter]. There are now 34 million people, the same amount of water and same amount of transmission facilities. I mean, you don't have to be a deep thinker to realize that at some point we're going to be in a great deal of trouble.

WOLLENBERG: But you think that's because term limits makes it impossible for people to gain the knowledge.

CONNELLY: That's right.

WOLLENBERG: and also gain the security to be willing to take on issues like that?

CONNELLY: Yes. You didn't have a bunch of deep thinkers as members of the legislature before term limits. But you did have the opportunity for a few members, men and women, to gain some experience and assuming they had some ethical standards of their own and the intelligence and the breadth of intellectual ability to do so, they would and could then get to a point where you could get a Byron Sher, for example, a bright and competent and able man who moonlights as a professor of law at Stanford University. I like that. He is just an incredible guy. And there were a few always like him.

[End of Tape 10 Side A]

[Begin Tape 10 Side B]

WOLLENBERG about the effect of term limits

CONNELLY I think the worst effect of term limits is Proposition 140 has made the lobbyist corps the nub the nucleus the hub around which this place revolves Because they re here year in and year out They don t change There are lobbyists over there that have been here for twenty five years They know *all* about it They know all the ins and outs they know how to skin every single cat they know all the games and they are the purveyors of money So why wouldn t they be the most powerful? What a stupid thing to hand them to create a praetorian guard in effect and then disarm everybody else

WOLLENBERG I guess in addition to all that they also have the knowledge They actually have the knowledge of the issues that the members can t spend the time to accumulate

CONNELLY That s right They were always a valuable asset for that reason they were always a valuable asset because a lobbyist knew at least in my time that they had better not lie to you because their stock in trade was their integrity was the perception if they would tell you the truth and would tell you if you asked the right question Now you had to ask the right question before they would answer So now nobody over there knows the right question So they say Well I didn t tell anybody anything I didn t say anything like that No they didn t But because nobody asked them [Laughter] the question that would have elicited it And that is the experience that is gone and that is the power that we ve transmitted and built into the Third House

You know last year there were at least seven or eight hundred registered lobbyists and behind them were staffs of professional people who were there year in and year out. I'll bet there were 2,500-3,000 people. If you counted all the hands and the ship's cook in the lobbies around Sacramento, you would have an enormous force. And that's their business. I mean they know more about the bill process, how to amend a bill, how to move a bill, how to spot it, how to find it, how to hijack a bill, they have become experts in all of these kinds of things, how to find a vehicle when your issue has died in committee and you haven't got time to introduce another bill, so you have to find one that is already moving. There are lots of spot bills hanging around, you have got to know which ones they are. Then you have to have a dossier on every member of the legislature so you can find who this guy is sympathetic to, or this person is antagonistic to. I mean it is on computers. I mean the CIA doesn't have a system as good as the Third House does around here.

WOLLENBERG: It sounds like what you're really saying is that we have moved back to the pre-Unruh period, we've moved back to that period before Unruh professionalized the legislature and the staff and all that.

CONNELLY: That's right. And the proponents of term limits and that kind of stuff say, "Well, but there are laws now that keep them from doing these bad things." Yes, well, there were laws that kept Pat Nolan from taking ten grand in cash in front of the FBI cameras over there, too, but it happened.

WOLLENBERG: Yes.

CONNELLY: And I think that we're going to continue to see really dumb things happen. It's not that we're going to see great raids on the public treasury, that's not

what happens. It's hard to steal money from the state of California, very difficult to steal money from the state of California. But it's not all that difficult to give somebody a little trade advantage, or some little competitive advantage, or to relieve someone of an onerous burden of fees or inspections or that kind of stuff. And so labor law suffers, and the statewide building standards, and construction, and where you take your freeway system, and what you do with all the major resources, water included, are all issues that need forethought and thinking, and people that know something about them.

I mean, the difference between 1960, when I started out, and today, in local government, is enormous. Instead of these little cow towns and a bunch of clowns bumping into each other in a council chamber, you have people who are making big decisions. And they are making high cost decisions. They are getting in and out of the bond market. They are selling equity, well, no, not selling equity, but they're selling bonds, and they're selling certificates of participation. And they're building things. And they're crowding out the bond market, or they're having impact on the bond market. And they're having an impact on transportation, and on public schools, and on water quality, and sewage treatment, and management of resources, rivers, and estuaries, and so on. It's not a simple little game anymore. So what we did was we took out all the experience, we said, "All right, everybody, every man come to Sacramento, and every man is a natural born legislator." And it's simply not true. Many people never had the aptitude for it [Laughter]. They were here for a long time. But certainly you're less likely to get people with the aptitude and the experience by doing what we did.

WOLLENBERG In 1990 the same year that Prop 140 passed Pete Wilson by a very narrow margin became governor

CONNELLY That s right

WOLLENBERG And you know it s interesting Willie Brown had established a pretty good working relationship over many years with Governor Deukemejian

CONNELLY Yes

WOLLENBERG But now a new Republican comes in it s my impression that there wasn t that same good working relationship

CONNELLY Well there wasn t He got along with Deukemejian because he and Deukemejian had come from the same kind of a background and arrived about the same time in 1981 82 It was different from 1990 Things were different The economy was in a different shape there were different issues on the table So I don t think he did get along as well with Wilson s people I always thought Wilson was kind of a I had known him in the early seventies when he was an assemblyman you know and I always thought he was kind of a nice guy I certainly didn t see him as an ideologue he was a go along kind of a guy He was the mayor of San Diego God knows what a mess that was and he survived Then he went back as a U S senator But I guess the idea was come to California and play it for two terms a young man good looking strike a lot of poses and run for president which is what most of them think they are going to do But I didn t see any vision for California and he was sort of the business community and industry s guy in Sacramento Not that Willie wasn t [Laughter] And maybe they were competing for this [Laughter] I don t know But there weren t many times when we had the

laughs that we had. There were some laughs in the Reagan years, there were lots of laughs [Laughter] in the Jerry Brown years, and there were some laughs in the Deukerian years, not many, he was a pretty dour guy. But not very many laughs with Pete Wilson. But there was one funny one.

There is an annual roast that goes on around here that lobbyists put on, and everybody gets up and says the most unpleasant things they can think of. And one of the issues that had always been a problem for Brown was his cars, because we buy the cars for the members, the Rules Committee bought the cars for the members, and they would park them in the building, in the basement of the building, it is a very nice arrangement. And Willie often had Porsches, and Testarossas, and Lamborghinis, and all this kind of stuff. It also added to the antagonism that the public felt.

So whenever the press corps would get bored, and they were bored much of the time, and they got tired of printing my salary in the newspaper, which they would do twice or three times every year, along with everybody else that made more than \$100,000, they would go down and they would do a story, they call them thumbsuckers, in the newspaper business. It is supposed to be a think piece about how God, am I it awful? And they do a thumbsucker on Willie Brown's cars. Well, half of the cars he drove, we didn't buy him Testarossas and Porsches and that kind of stuff, he bought those himself. But he would tell people [Laughter] that the state bought them. He would do that to annoy them. He would tell the press, he wouldn't probably say it outright, but he implied that it was. And they would always rise to the bait.

So they used to go down and photograph the cars in the basement. They would take the camera down there and then the sergeants would call me up and say, 'The press corps is down here.' I would say, 'That is a security breach, the mail room is down there, access to our bomb security. They have to get out of there.' So they throw them out and then one would photograph the others being thrown out of the basement. And you know, it filled an afternoon.

WOLLENBERG: You mean it made the afternoon or evening news?

CONNELLY: Yes. So I was at home one Sunday and the sergeants called me and, 'The governor is down here with a local television station, photographing a car that belongs to the governor's chief of staff, really, but it is a Porsche.' And they are telling the crew that it is Willie's car. And I said, 'No, we're not going to do that.' I said, 'I want you to stop it.' They said, 'Well, how?' I said, 'Stand in front of the camera.' I was working, so I cleaned up real fast and drove down here. The governor was there, but he had left by the time I got there. And our sergeant had stood in front of the television company's camera. And it turns out [Laughter] that Wilson was doing this for the roast which was scheduled for later in the week and it was a gag.

WOLLENBERG: Oh! [Laughter]

CONNELLY: But he wouldn't tell anybody that, because he was such a stiff-necked guy that he wouldn't say, 'Aww, it's all a joke.' So we stopped him, we told him, 'No, you have to leave, because the basement of the garage, the basement of the building belongs to the legislature, not to the governor's office. He has an elevator down there and a parking plate, but the parking area is ours.' So I

threw him out. I didn't know it was a joke until the next morning. Monday morning. I grabbed Brown as we got out of the car and I said, "You know I've got to tell you. I threw the governor out of here last night." He howled. And by noon we knew what had really happened. It was the news or the television guy that told me the story. But I threw the governor out.

WOLLENBERG [Laughter] And they actually they weren't even shooting Brown's car.

CONNELLY And that's what annoyed me because I thought, "You no good s.o.b.s. you're going to photograph a car and then imply that it's Brown's car. I mean he has got enough problems already. You know and I got on my high horse." [Laughter] I was dead wrong which is often the case when I get on my high horse.

WOLLENBERG I guess one of the big issues that divided Brown and Wilson was the budget. Was it 1992 when they couldn't pass the budget for ninety days or sixty days?

CONNELLY That's right.

WOLLENBERG Sixty days. I guess it was.

CONNELLY Yes. We have had trouble passing budgets before. That wasn't new. But usually it was a couple of days. But this one I think it was in '92 it got away from us. It was late August or early September. Now we have mechanisms in place. In fact when it happened this year we put the mechanisms in place. But one of the things the troops didn't get paid. The state workers didn't get paid. It was the first time that it happened and neither did the legislative staff and neither did the legislators. So we were faced with finding a way.

We had a lot of people you know at \$1 300 \$1 400 a month well maybe not \$2 000 a month But many times they were working mothers single mothers and there were a lot of them in the Capitol There are a lot of people in the Capitol that need the job like anyplace else and they don't have a way to carry themselves And when the first paycheck was missed they got scared and when the second paycheck was missed (they got paid bi monthly) there was a certain amount of panic So we went to the local banks Bank of America Wells Fargo and we asked them to give low interest loans immediate loans to people We couldn't say that we would stand behind the loans although we had the paychecks and the state's the Golden One Credit Union came on

WOLLENBERG State employees credit union?

CONNELLY State employees credit union So did the other banks too They were much more reluctant to do it Oh a lot of heavy corporate vice presidents sighing and heaving sighs and all that kind of stuff But Golden One set up a deal not only for the legislative staff but for all employees Well there are 350 000 state employees and for a credit union to start fronting paychecks I mean you know you've got to ask [Laughter] what kind of reserves do they have and how far are they willing to go? And they did They carried us all the way through People who were on direct deposit were slightly favored and if they went over to Golden One and opened a direct deposit account they got a partial payment they didn't get their full paycheck They did it for commercial advantage and good for them

We would gather the troops all together the first year and we would try to explain how it was all going to work and we would do it in the big committee rooms and we would do it three or four sessions so that we could get everybody on it. And by this time we had television so we would get on our closed circuit television and we could let the troops know in the field. Because we had 100 plus district offices much of our staff was strewn all over the state. They weren't getting paid either [Laughter]. And they were scared people were scared to death.

WOLLENBERG People live paycheck to paycheck

CONNELLY Well sure they do. And little people you know they need to buy groceries make car payments and that kind of stuff. So I mean I lent lots of money personally we just had no choice. But we covered it.

But it was nerve wracking and it made for a very long summer. And it didn't have to happen it didn't have to happen. We could have solved these problems much earlier and much more expeditiously. But you got into these ideological issues. I mean every budget year since that I can remember the abortion issue is always one of the issues that I can't book for this budget because. In this case we had a \$102 billion budget. The money for state supported abortions was minuscule. You couldn't find it. It was ten blocks west of the decimal point. But it would be that kind of thing that would hold up the budget. They would strut and posture on that and equally minuscule minor things and then give in after a suitable amount of time. I think that part of what happens is that it did work a few times. It got a lot of press and there was drama. [In a low dramatic voice] The budget drama. There's no

budget drama anymore. Nobody gives a big rat's ass what happens here across the street. In any event, the feds stepped in and said that under Fair Employment Practices, you have to pay the troops, whether you have a budget or not.

WOLLENBERG: Everybody except the legislature.

CONNELLY: The then Controller Gray Davis used to say, "Well, I will not pay the legislators until they pass the budget, you know, whatever." But everybody got paid. And everybody got paid their per diem, too. The members got paid their per diem after the fact. So nobody got too badly hurt.

WOLLENBERG: When you had that budget face-off, was that a matter of policy, or did it become a matter of personality between Brown and Wilson, or was it just because the two-thirds majority is required to pass a budget?

CONNELLY: Well, the supermajority is the biggest problem. As you know, California is only one of three or four states in the union that has a supermajority for fiscal matters and for the state budget. Two-thirds is very hard to get, especially when historically the party in power rarely has two-thirds. You know, they get in the high forties and the low fifties, then they would drop back to the low forties, so you always have to get five or eight or ten votes from the other party. You know, people tend to make a melodrama out of it. It is a way to get things that have nothing to do with the budget. I mean, I am sure that parking places and the size of the office is a factor, as in everything else, why wouldn't it have been then? And they rode that horse until that horse dropped.

WOLLENBERG But wasn't it sometimes portrayed as a conflict between Wilson and Brown between those two personalities?

CONNELLY No I don't think so I don't think so You would never know what was said You know that was when the Big Five started to meet the two Budget Committee chairmen a member of the other party from each house the speaker and the pro tem and the governor That is more than five Anyway you get five of them in there and they would sit in there and laugh and giggle and have sandwiches and who knows what the hell went on?

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY And I don't think it had much to do with negotiations Maybe it did They would always come out after and hold separate press conferences you know They loved to do that It's because they have seen too many movies! In the movies they always do that The guys come out of the darkened office and their shirts are opened and they are carrying their coats I mean they probably sat there with their coat and tie on the whole time they would open their collar and take their coat off when they come out You know who knows? But the issue was invisible within a very short time It evaporated It turned into the mist from which it was manufactured [Laughter] in many cases

WOLLENBERG One of the things about Pete Wilson was that he would tie his campaigns to specific initiatives

CONNELLY Yes Somewhat more successful than others of course [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG Prop 140 in 1990 and then of course in 1994 Prop 187 regarding undocumented aliens Then in 1996 the presidential campaign Prop 209 and

affirmative action

CONNELLY Yes

WOLLENBERG In one sense this is a politician using this process for political ends But in another sense these propositions are a way of shattering this whole delicate internal game that you have been describing

CONNELLY Yes

WOLLENBERG Willie Brown can negotiate and can make deals and then somebody comes along with an initiative and blows the whole thing out of the water

CONNELLY Well and of course in many cases and especially in the early days of the initiative games he would still win because an initiative has a number of drawbacks to it one of which is it can't be amended So once it gets onto the ballot and somebody votes for it many of them become effective the next day [Laughter] So you have got instant law And if you're wrong you're instantly wrong And as long as Joe Remcho the attorney down there in San Francisco was around to find all the flaws and holes in the thing we often won

WOLLENBERG You mean by going to court and challenging?

CONNELLY Sure It turned out that the damn thing was unconstitutional My fear was that one of these days the bad guys would hire Joe Remcho before they wrote the thing and that he would write them one that was bombproof But they never got around to doing that There was always some egocentric lawyer who wrote the thing for them Sometimes the Leg Counsel would see them because a member might bring it in to see but that didn't guarantee that their recommendations were taken And also that was a tough place to be for the

Legislative Counsel because like Proposition 140 it had a profound effect on the Legislative Counsel [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG That's right as staff they were affected by it

CONNELLY So we were talking major conflict of interest

WOLLENBERG In a sense an initiative is giving power to the third branch of government you're giving a lot of power to the courts because so often they are the ones who determine what this means and whether it is going to be enforced or not

CONNELLY Well I think that it had some other intended effects It made people skeptical and contemptuous because they were going to solve the whole problem the proposition would be painted in such a way you know the foreign workers and the 187 it is going to get rid of all those pesky foreigners And people had visions of buses arriving at the border down there and discharging Mexican nationals back into Mexico at the Tijuana crossing station Of course that is not what happened What happened is nothing happened

WOLLENBERG It was one of the ones that was never enforced because it was ruled unconstitutional

CONNELLY That's right Then the court battles Well what is the point of spending all this time and money? And all you need if you want to run a ballot proposition is enough crazies with ironing boards standing in front of supermarkets and getting paid for collecting signatures I mean those are professional signature gatherers

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY You know if you have the money and the tobacco industry and the liquor industry and the oil industry have proved over and over again that if they

want to they can float an initiative The basic intelligence of the electorate is demonstrated by the fact that now almost everything fails Nobody wants to vote for anything

WOLLENBERG But you can still get things on the ballot How does that affect the legislators themselves? I would think that some legislators feel Well what the hell? If it is going to be a controversial issue we won't deal with it We'll put it on the ballot

CONNELLY That's right That's right I mean we have plenty of major issues in California that remain unresolved For an urban giant state this is the fifth or sixth largest economy in the world One of which we hit on a minute ago water transmission and water facilities I mean we got in trouble with energy [Laughter] because we didn't build enough power plants We now know that if we had practiced a modicum of conservation we probably didn't need to build them But we found certain truths have emerged just in the last year But water is the same thing When the California Water Project was built in the late fifties early sixties it had such a surplus in it that the surplus was sold for years for agricultural uses And Metropolitan Water District bought futures in it and tied it up and then resold this surplus water

WOLLENBERG For a tiny portion of the true cost

CONNELLY Yes for a tiny portion of it So now we have got people who believe that water is cheap And in recent years we are beginning to discover that water has a market value Oh my! You mean it's not \$10 an acre foot which is 370 000 gallons? Maybe it's \$150 Or maybe it's \$1 500 And when it gets to \$1 500 desalination begins to make sense you see and solar evaporation

begins to make sense. But our real problem is that we're sitting on a transmission system in California for both state and the federal system and they are parallel to each other which is another form of madness.

WOLLENBERG: The Central Valley Project and the State Water Project.

CONNELLY: The Central Valley Project and the State Water Project parallel each other state water from in some cases similar or adjacent or even the same watershed. They all pass through the Delta. And the islands of the California Delta the two or three hundred islands down there which occurred as a kind of alluvial deposits with dikes and berms the floor of the islands are now in some cases thirty feet below sea level. Thirty feet below sea level! And the water is passing from northern California where the water is to southern California where the folks are through these very fragile channels. When we saw liquefaction in the 1989 earthquake in San Francisco where the ground shakes and everything turns to jelly. Wait until we have an earthquake in the Delta and now we can't get water through there and most of the state the southern part of the state is dependent on water that passes through that Delta.

WOLLENBERG: Of course that again was an issue that came before the voters in a proposition and they voted down the Peripheral Canal.

CONNELLY: And they scared people so badly. You know that was the only election where you had votes negative votes in this case 97 percent.

WOLLENBERG: All over the Bay Area.

CONNELLY: Nobody is going to touch an issue where 97 percent of the people oppose something. Because why? Because the crazies managed to paint that as we were filling southern California's swimming pools. And people said No.

way [pounds table] We're not going to fill southern California's swimming pools. It had nothing to do with it. The resources, the conservation community was full of baloney, so was the agricultural community, there was charge, countercharge, it ended up that the Sierra Club was on the side of one of the big farmers down there. I mean, nobody knew what the heck they were doing.

But that issue remains alive, and remains a major one. California has got to solve this water question. This Cal Fed process thing that they are fooling with has not solved it yet. I certainly hope it does. I certainly hope we can

WOLLENBERG: You're saying that because of these initiatives

CONNELLY: People get scared.

WOLLENBERG: And the legislators just

CONNELLY: Won't touch them with a twenty-foot pole. Hell no. There is probably a book that gets passed around [Laughter] when they first get elected. *Issues Not to Touch*. It's like [Laughter] that poor dumb guy, he came up here from Santa Barbara County in the early seventies. He was a nice guy, nice Democrat, a local fellow, local government fellow. He gets to Sacramento, and Gladys Sargeant. Gladys Sargeant was a lobbyist here whose husband owned the Oakland football team. To keep her out of his hair, he used to send her up here, and she had all the money in the world, and her organization was called Pets and Pals. And she, Sargeant, used to wear great big hats, great big floppy hats, and she had a voice like a truck driver, and she could drink *everybody* under the table. She was incredible. I knew Sargeant. I mean, she was up here active until she was in her seventies or eighties, and maybe even

beyond that. But she got this poor dumb guy [Laughter] to carry a bill to put starlings on the protected species list. So he carries it. Starlings, there are *billions* of starlings. That's the last thing that needs to be on the list.

So people you know, those kinds of things happened, and everybody had a good joke, a laugh at his expense. But people learned from that, and people get scared. We could have solved the property tax issue before Proposition 13 happened, but everybody knew it is dangerous to play with property tax law, you know, because it is badly understood, people don't understand that there are state and federal taxes and local taxes. It's too complex, stay away from it. And so they do. And it isn't going to get any better with a bunch of newcomers all telling each other to stay away from all the salient major issues that [Laughter] face the state.

WOLLENBERG: Yes. One other issue that had become a major issue by the nineties was sexual harassment.

CONNELLY: Oh, yes.

WOLLENBERG: And certainly the legislature in Sacramento began to be affected by charges, if not the reality of sexual harassment.

CONNELLY: Yes. Oh, well, unfortunately, there was some smoke where there was fire, yes. It was in the early nineties that we began to see this issue arise. Members like now Senator Jackie Speier, was one of the principals who realized that we needed, for any number of reasons, to have a policy. The absence of a policy meant that you weren't taking it seriously and you weren't doing anything to preclude it. This was not only reprehensible morally, but legally it meant that you had no defense [Laughter] when you got into the

courtroom When the judge said Well what have you done Mr Connelly to help the legislature to find its way in this issue of sexual harassment? Does anybody know what it is? You don't want to be there So we put together a policy and a program whereby we had a mechanism for people women or men who felt that they had a grievance

WOLLENBERG Was this something that was legislated?

CONNELLY It was legislated it was required by legislation

WOLLENBERG You as CAO were supposed to administer the process

CONNELLY But it was required of everyone I believe of all public entities I guess probably not firemen they wouldn't have included firemen because they would have been afraid to

WOLLENBERG Yes And this was Jackie Speier?

CONNELLY Jackie Speier's bill So we sat down and we wrote a really good solid system with a process in it And we had a very motherly woman who was a nurse she was paid for out of senate and assembly funds They ran a regular aid station it is still up there for heart attack victims and all the old duffers having gastro problems But anyhow we identified her as our point person It was hard sometimes for a woman or the object of sexual harassment to go and tell me I mean they could have but people get afraid of going into the Rules Committee So we had this process And she did resolve a lot of problems Because at that time and today a great many men especially older men my age my generation don't understand what is meant by sexual harassment Fanny patting and touching and titty jokes and all this kind of stuff was a part of this place as long as I can remember And there were lots

and lots of women who were here because of that Not to be harassed but to
be taken out and to be shown up around town

[End of Tape 10 Side B]

[Begin Tape 11 Side A]

WOLLENBERG We were discussing your establishing a process dealing with sexual
harassment cases

CONNELLY Well we were obliged to do so because of legislation We were told to do so
by the speaker Willie was very supportive of drafting and promulgating a
sexual harassment policy I had seen it before unfortunately when I was with
the East Bay Parks department down in Contra Costa County We had a large
police force and we had an awful time with trying to train them In fact we
hired a consultant trainer to help them to understand what it was all about and
they harassed her so badly she resigned

WOLLENBERG Yes I remember you mentioned that

CONNELLY And threatened to sue the park district

WOLLENBERG Yes Harass the harassment person

CONNELLY Yes I mean how stupid can you be? And that is the sort of thing that shows
up in a courtroom too I mean people remember that But we were I think
we were motivated principally by a desire to recognize the problem and to do
something about it

WOLLENBERG The process that you were putting into effect in Sacramento would it apply to
legislators as well?

CONNELLY Yes it applied to everybody

WOLLENBERG So it applied to both staff people and legislators

CONNELLY And it was a mechanism so that you could with impunity make a complaint and not have it cost you your job The other part of it was the sensitivity training Now I am not a sensitivity training kind of a guy [Laughter] by the way I mean I don't see too many shrinks and I've always had a real problem with the ideas of counseling which has to do with my problem But I recognized very quickly that most people didn't know what we were talking about Most men and a lot of women thought it was a gag and not to be taken seriously By this time there was a body of law developing because this wasn't brand new in the early nineties this had been building for the past fifteen or twenty years before that

So we contacted a local firm and they provided two attorneys who happened to be women They had an excellent one hour presentation and it was very very illustrative and it was showing people what the courts were talking about I mean we had to put it in that context You know You might think that these are jokes but this is how a courtroom has seen this in the past This is how a judge has seen this This is how a jury has seen this And so this is the real McCoy This is what it is I remember we had arranged to tape it we put it on videotape so all the members all the staff could see it and the district offices We did that several times We would do it once a year First we did it once every six months

But the first time we did it with the members they didn't show up I went to Brown and I said You know Mr Brown as you know I am not an attorney but the attorneys tell me that if we have a problem here and the

plaintiff's attorney can show that these people didn't take it serious enough to even attend. He said, "You're absolutely right." So I took a roster and he had me check off their names. Every member had to come to sit through that thing. I stood at the door to check their name off on the telephone roster.

WOLLENBERG: Did they all come?

CONNELLY: They all finally came. They all came. Both caucuses had a word with them and told them that, "We are going to do it once more and we want you all there." And they were awful. It reminded me of the cops down at the park district. Men *and* women making jokes. You know, because they see themselves as above the law. There is a process by which these people sometimes lose touch with reality and this was one of them. They thought that in the event that we would pay them off and get rid of them if there was a charge and in fact we did [Laughter] in some cases. So they were not that far wrong. But when the first one lost an election as a consequence of it and that did happen also, then they began to take it much more seriously.

We had all kinds. We had a woman member who hit on a guy who was her staff person, who was a homosexual. So we really had a mess to straighten that one out, but it was serious. I mean, it sounds funny, but it was a serious problem. And he didn't think it was funny and she didn't realize what she was getting into, because she didn't know he was gay. [Laughter] So we promulgated, we put it in place and it worked. It didn't work across the board, because we had a number of cases.

We also may have sensitized people who had a bent towards being litigious. We may have encouraged some of that. There was a time when the

newspapers were full of million dollar settlements. There was a big law firm in San Francisco that had a settlement where a woman got three or four million dollars. So I think there was some of that. And some of the charges were. I mean, I knew the participants pretty well in all cases [Laughter] and if I had been Solomon then I would probably have settled in a different way. But I am not Solomon and so I found myself in many, many, many depositions. We spent a lot of time, a lot of money. We hired good law firms because the Legislative Counsel doesn't have attorneys who practice litigation. I mean, that's not their bag. So we would go outside and hire law firms that had specialists and they were able to help us enormously in refining our sexual harassment program.

WOLLENBERG: Would you hire lawyers to defend people?

CONNELLY: Yes, oh, yes, sure. Because the Rules Committee would be sued. When the suit was filed it was the Rules Committee and often my name [Laughter] was on the subpoena.

WOLLENBERG: So even if it was against a particular legislator you would defend that person?

CONNELLY: Yes, oh, yes, right. It worked both ways, happened both ways. Sometimes they would just sue the member and sometimes they would sue us and sometimes they would do both.

WOLLENBERG: Would you ever be on the other side? In other words, if a staff person was suing because he or she felt they were harassed, would the state

CONNELLY: Did we pay the litigants?

WOLLENBERG: Would you be on both sides, would you be paying both sides?

CONNELLY No. It was the job of it was the duty of the person bringing the charges to pay for their own law. And terrible things would happen too. You could file a lawsuit. If you've got fifty bucks, you can file a lawsuit. You don't have to be an attorney. And if you want to avoid a loss of the action through statute of limitations, you can file the lawsuit in a different county. That happened to us sometimes. So we didn't even know it happened. We didn't even know it and so we couldn't help to resolve the problem. Also, a person under state law, a staff person under state law, has to get permission to sue the state. They go through the Department of Housing and Community Development and they have to go through the Equal Opportunity Employment people. They look at the issue first and they say, "Well, it's an issue that is beyond our powers to resolve" and therefore you get a letter from them to sue. So sometimes the first time we knew there was a problem was when that office would call me up and say [Laughter] "You're being sued."

Other times, there was one celebrated case where a woman was working in a member's office and he was, you know, a little fanny patting and jokes and the other women in the office didn't think much of it, they didn't mind it, but this woman did. She was a very attractive young woman, a young mother, single mother. I had not even heard a rumble that there was a problem in this thing until the nurse, who was our intermediary, our first point of contact, came to me with this woman's permission, because she had to have that before she could talk to me about it. "There is a problem in this office." So I knew. I had never met the woman and in point of fact, I never saw her. I don't think I had ever laid eyes on her. But I was looking at some personnel

records a few days later and I see that this woman is being fired summarily fired [Laughter] The flag went up

WOLLENBERG Just after she brought this up

CONNELLY Yes The flag went right up So I stopped that I called I had the attorneys talk to her and we put her on a leave of absence She stayed on leave of absence for four months We paid her her salary and she didn't have to come in We offered her training so that she could change jobs and find another position we offered another position in the legislature In fact we gave her one and she didn't like it she quit She said that wouldn't do she wanted to just go home and think about it for a while And she finally filed the lawsuit she filed it out of town so we didn't know it was coming Attorneys like to blindside people that kind of stuff And if they really want to raise a rumpus of course they will do a whole press conference We had lots of press conferences [Laughter] on the steps of the Capitol That's when I learned that we were being sued

So I didn't always feel that the litigants were seeking justice and truth and the American way I mean I thought in a lot of cases they were looking for the bucks that were involved But harassment really did happen There was an awful lot of the kinds of things that traditionally had happened in offices for years touching and making jokes and saying things or just using bad language that offended people The legislature learned hard

WOLLENBERG Did it change? Did it change the culture?

CONNELLY I think it did They haven't had anywhere near as many in recent years as we did in the early nineties I think it sort of fell out of fashion It was a fashion

it was a fashion in litigation Everybody learned how to handle it better And it s very expensive for everybody It s very expensive for the legislature very expensive for the appellant because they have got to hire a law firm that is willing to front all these costs And you can quickly get to three or four hundred thousand dollars in costs on these things

WOLLENBERG I m wondering did people just learn how to handle it or has the culture really changed I mean have the relationships between men and women really changed?

CONNELLY Chuck I d like to tell you that I believe in my heart of hearts that the culture changed that members are more sensitive and that men keep their hands to themselves And to some extent it did happen that s true And I think that when the members sit around in their caucuses and this subject comes up or someone mentions a young woman or female legislator mentions somebody somebody will have heard these stories at least I hope so Or I hope the sergeant at arms that is serving the coffee says Well remember I remember when So I hope that there is some benefit because it certainly tore things apart Poor Tom Connolly (not me [Laughter]) who got himself into trouble with his staff in San Diego for using some inappropriate language and some references He was planning a job action against these women on another issue at least he always represented that before this happened they knew they were going to be fired that they ginned up this sexual harassment thing Whatever there was the truth of it it was settled just after I left And they settled for very large sums of money for the women who were involved in it

WOLLENBERG When a settlement like that occurs does any of the money come from the person who was charged? Does it all come from the state?

CONNELLY Unfortunately no Unfortunately there was some legislation that would have placed a greater burden on the members and I always thought that was a good idea if they thought they were going to have to pay something out of their own funds maybe they would have to go to their homeowners insurance policy

There was a famous case where a member in the Republican caucus hired a bunch of Rent a Guards and had them challenge Hispanic voters in an election in the late eighties He was taken to court in the federal courts and he was fined three or four hundred thousand dollars and it came out of his homeowners insurance

WOLLENBERG Oh it did?

CONNELLY I supposed that once they get elected they get a bigger coverage

WOLLENBERG Yes But the conclusion of all this is that sexual harassment was a major issue

CONNELLY It was

WOLLENBERG Looking at this in the context of the Monica Lewinsky and Gary Condit cases is there a culture a sexual culture that involves politics?

CONNELLY Well God knows we had enough girlfriends on the payroll Usually not on the members payroll That was part of the culture from way back even into the sixties when I was first here There was general knowledge that such and such was the sweetie of senator so and so but she worked in assemblyman so and so s office And they used to take care of each other that way And as

anybody who has ever worked in an office knows one of the many reasons it's not a good idea to have romantic affairs in the office is that sometimes they end and they don't always end amicably. So when they don't end amicably you don't want to have somebody who you're going to see everyday working for you. So they would get their pal in the other house to hire that person.

So there were women who did move back and forth between the houses as a consequence of unsuccessful romantic relationships. But I'm not suggesting that and I don't mean to suggest that it was women who brought this on. I mean there were plenty of willing participants in sexual liaison. I mean a lot of that kind of stuff went on here.

But by and large the members were pretty insensitive. I mean if you have ever sat in a hearing room and watched members of a committee harass the public or harass witnesses in the rudest, most domineering, bombastic way you know how absolutely cruel and thoughtless and arrogant they often are. So it's not hard to believe that women who were their employees were treated very badly as chattel. Yes you'll have to work until 7:00 tonight because I say you have to work even if it means that you can't pick up your kids at day care and somebody else is going to have to cook dinner and you don't know who.

From that level I mean that happens every place in business. But also young women who were told that they had to go to fund raisers they had to appear and they were to go home from work early and change clothes so that they look their best at a fund raiser so you would have lots of pretty girls.

And you know you used to look at the staff in the hallway and you didn't often see women past forty and you still probably don't. Although they tend to be the ones that know how it all works but we always hoped that there was one in every office. Because most of the others didn't know where the bill room was.

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY But I think it's endemic in our society. And I always said that the worst thing about the California legislature is that it exactly mirrors the population of California and that is the greatest indictment you can make. I mean greed carelessness tending to rush off half cocked. I mean those are all human characteristics and these guys have it in spades.

WOLLENBERG Well Bob in 1994 partly as part of a whole Republican comeback nationally but also as part of Pete Wilson's re-election victory maybe partly due to Proposition 187 the Republicans gained the majority in the assembly. For the first time in what fifteen years Willie Brown didn't have his forty one votes. And yet for almost a year after that or for most of 1995 in one form or another he still seemed to be able to control the assembly. How was that possible without forty one votes?

CONNELLY Well he probably did get the votes. He got a Republican to cross the line Paul Horcher. And he skillfully played on the fact that the Republican caucus was in such internal disarray that their egos were even more pronounced and more voracious there than they were in the Democratic caucus and that is saying something. And they defeated themselves. I mean Willie didn't defeat them. Willie is a slightly built man who could always win in a rough

and tumble battle by using his opponent's weight against him. That's what he did with the Republican caucus. He was always a couple of beats ahead of them.

If Willie ever starts playing chess he is going to be the world champion because he is always three moves ahead of everybody else. He plants assistants and he cultivates friends before he needs them. He just had enough of the caucus in turmoil between promises and threats and winsome requests and all the rest. But he kept it going. I mean there were lots of concessions. He had to make concessions. He did not want to not be the speaker while he was organizing his run for mayor of San Francisco. It was important for him to have that pedestal to speak from even though during the year he was around less and less and was less and less of a factor. But in December on the first Monday in December the constitution says that the legislature shall reconvene and we reconvened.

WOLLENBERG This would be December of 1994.

CONNELLY '94 just after the November elections. And at the beginning of each session the chief clerk stands in for the speaker and stands at the podium and is the presiding officer. So however briefly the chief clerk is the king of the world in this place. The issue was a member, a Republican member who had left the house because he had won an election to go to the senate where he had by that time already participated in the election of the pro tem in the senate. He had been given office space and authority to hire staff and provided with a leased car and many of the trappings which would suggest that he was a senator [Laughter] and no longer an assemblyman. But he had not actually

resigned his assembly seat And until a certain number of hours into the fifth Monday the first Monday of November he was an assemblyman So he wanted to do both He wanted to vote against Willie and for the pro tem of the other house and Willie believed that he could not do that The issue came down to a ruling by the chair who is Dotson Wilson who is

WOLLENBERG The chief clerk

CONNELLY the chief clerk a black fellow who had come out of Willie s staff a very bright young attorney super straight guy Last guy in the row never wanted to be in this position

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY I mean the man I believe he did have some immediate health problems and long term health problems because it was a pretty stressful day

WOLLENBERG I ll bet

CONNELLY The press played it so that it became the paramount story of the day and it went on for most of the day And he would not rule in favor of throwing out the vote of

WOLLENBERG This is Johnson Ross Johnson

CONNELLY Ross Johnson So we were unable to elect a speaker that Monday That left us in a real limbo And I remember Brown s comment to the press in the hallway afterwards [Laughter] when he said that Dotson Wilson had been his first and would certainly be his last affirmative action hire

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY He was madder than hell at him But you know he was bound by the rules of procedure and by state law and he was probably right and he did what he

wanted to do. As it turned out, he has remained the chief clerk to this day.

WOLLENBERG: You mean Dotson Wilson?

CONNELLY: Dotson Wilson, yes.

WOLLENBERG: He did what he

CONNELLY: Yes. He was a straight shooter and an OK guy. I don't think that he and Willie were ever very close friends again. But anyhow, that left all of December without anybody running the store. So the legislative attorneys advised me as a chief administrative officer that we needed [Laughter] to have somebody who could sign the requests for payment to the controller's office, which was necessary for every single expenditure that we made. There would be no paychecks; there would be nothing without somebody being in charge. And since there was no speaker, the speaker not only appoints the chairman of the Rules Committee, the chairman of the Rules Committee then confers the authority to sign these things on the CAO, which was me, but there was none.

So we suggested that maybe we ought to write a resolution and get everybody to pass it, which we did, making the CAO authorizing me to act as the fiduciary responsible person for that month. Which made me, in effect, the local king for thirty days, because they didn't come back until January 5th or 6th, something like that.

It was a very difficult time because the Republicans, because they had a majority [Laughter], certainly thought that they were entitled to the speakership. So they did not like asking a Democratic staff guy for authority to hire people, because this was the time of year when new members hire

people but my brief was very narrowly drawn in this resolution and I literally did not have the authority to let anybody hire anybody because it didn't work that way I could just continue to It was a status quo thing As a matter of fact it didn't amount to very much it just enabled us to get the troops paid and that sort of thing But it caused a lot of heartburn amongst the Republican leadership They thought that Willie was through me still exercising his the tentacles of evil and all this kind of stuff

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY and you would hear this kind of crap in comments and newspapers all of which would get faithfully reported of course The more scurrilous the better you know

WOLLENBERG Yes

CONNELLY So I took a certain amount of guff for it for a month or so But it was shortly after that that both parties decided that there would be two CAOs So in early January I guess I had a colleague We were co CAOs

WOLLENBERG A Republican

CONNELLY A Republican guy He was a nice guy He was the chief of staff for Doris Allen the first one The first thing I did was to take him over to our fiscal department and sit down for a one day briefing full day briefing on how the assembly managed its funds including the critical pathway which the assembly must follow and does to this day of going through the state controller's office to spend any money There were no slush funds there were no Swiss bank accounts there was no revolving accounts there was *no cash* follow my lips [Laughter] And I convinced this fellow

WOLLENBERG What was his name?

CONNELLY God I don't remember I don't remember his name

WOLLENBERG Don't worry about it

CONNELLY He was a bit of a non entity He was a nice guy and he understood But he was motivated by his caucus and his caucus was mostly interested in getting my office literally the office that I had my desk in They said Well we are the majority party our CAO should have the office But I was sitting in it and I stayed in it until the end of the year when I retired And there were several successors to this co chief administrative officer because of course Ms Allen did not fare too well with her own caucus

WOLLENBERG That's right Because actually for a while Brown continued on as a speaker

CONNELLY That's right

WOLLENBERG I guess because it was a forty forty tie imposed

CONNELLY Yes something like that

WOLLENBERG Then Doris Allen a Republican who was willing to gain Democratic support served as speaker

CONNELLY Yes She got the entire Democratic caucus to vote

WOLLENBERG Right

CONNELLY So she came in the same way Willie did but the opposite way She came in with Democratic votes I think she had thirty nine Democratic votes or forty and herself

WOLLENBERG And she Well I mean to what extent was she I guess you could say a kind of a stalking horse for Willie Brown? A puppet of Willie Brown's?

CONNELLY Well Willie I never understood fully understood her motive Miss Allen had been around the place for a long time she was no newcomer and she was certainly aware that having come to the speakership with [Laughter] forty Democratic votes and a Republican speaker that she did not win the hearts and minds of her caucus And indeed they shot at her everyday and they were quite rude and quite obstreperous

The woman sat as her own chairman of the Rules Committee so she didn't even appoint a Rules Committee chairman she would come in and sit with us And she was a decent human being who was in a totally untenable situation It was just awful She was under a lot of personal stress and I felt very sorry for her because she was powerless to do anything I mean I don't even know how we got chairs of the committees assigned Eventually they did they got chairs out there But it was a most unproductive year And Willie had not helped by telling the press in one of his off hand remarks that they'll never find the money I've got it all hidden in Switzerland which was

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY It was *not* true There was no money there was no money we didn't have any cash and I tried to make that clear [Brooks] Firestone a Republican member from Santa Barbara made it a personal crusade to go after me and he did everything but bring charges against me suggesting that I had cash hidden someplace It wasn't true and I couldn't convince him

They wanted an audit done and we had been doing audits for some years I had ordered an audit program to cover my own backside many years before because as the CAO with fiduciary responsibility you are responsible for

whether it was there or not. So I had that audit and I knew that in the audit there was a bunch of furniture and typewriters and things like that missing. It was old stuff and it amounted to several hundreds of thousands of dollars but it is one of these things you carry on the audit because you couldn't fix it, you couldn't find it and it wasn't worth it to chase it down.

The Republicans leapt onto that one, you know, and made suggestions that there had been all sorts of misbehavior and malfeasance and all kinds of stuff. And hired additional firms to come in and audit us and look at it. Big Eight auditing firms. And we were being audited by a Big Eight auditing firm. So when we got to sit down with the auditors they said, 'Well, you know, what's the problem, there's no problem here. You're running the place like you're supposed to run the place.' The audits were designed to test whether you were meeting the statutory requirements, whether you were meeting good business practices, whether there was accountability and whether there was cross checking, the same person that had ordered something couldn't sign for it, that sort of thing. And we had been doing that for years, there was nothing there. This guy Firestone went on and on and on. He finally ended up boring his caucus.

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY It was a witch hunt, the Salem witch hunt, he couldn't produce a witch. But then poor Doris, towards the middle of the summer, there was one particularly ugly incident when she and Willie were having dinner at a restaurant down here on L street, a steakhouse, Chicago, something like that, a high end, costly place. And unfortunately, next to them at a table was a reporter. And Willie

must I don't know whether maybe he didn't see him because his eyesight is bad. Anyhow the guy sat there and wrote on his napkin the entire conversation in which and Willie never denied it and it never got into the court he was telling her how to finesse the Republican caucus and telling her to you know promise it all and deliver nothing and all this kind of stuff. A lot of wonderful quotes

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY All of which ended up in a tornado of a newspaper article which just drove the Republican caucus wild

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY And shortly thereafter Miss

WOLLENBERG Allen

CONNELLY Allen was deposed and replaced by the soon to be forgotten Brian Setencich who was a very young guy twenty seven twenty eight years old maybe a little older than that from Fresno

WOLLENBERG Was he also the same kind of thing where he

CONNELLY He was the same kind of thing he was

WOLLENBERG He was put in by a Democratic vote?

CONNELLY He had a lot of Democratic votes and he just was not up to the job he didn't have the necessary experience. He was a first term. I mean you go into the office where I had been dealing with Willie Brown for fifteen years and find this guy sitting there who couldn't really effectively have been the receptionist. I mean with the level of knowledge and breadth of

experience

[End of Tape 11 Side A]

[Begin Tape 11 Side B]

WOLLENBERG in 1995 I guess originally what happened was that Paul Horcher one of the Republicans was willing to vote for Willie Brown as speaker

CONNELLY Right and did

WOLLENBERG And did So that made it for awhile a forty forty split Then when the Republicans finally I guess they actually recalled him from office

CONNELLY In March

WOLLENBERG In March Horcher And then

CONNELLY I worked in his campaign [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG [Laughter] Was that the only time you worked for a Republican campaign?

CONNELLY Knowingly [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG [Laughter] So then after that then when they had their forty one votes that s when Brown then worked this deal where first Doris Allen then Brian Setencich these I guess you could call them rebel Republicans

CONNELLY Rebel Republicans and straw persons I mean they were not serious He used them to divide the Republican caucus and it worked very well

WOLLENBERG And it sounds as if he still therefore had a lot of input

CONNELLY He had a lot of input The Democrats we were two years away from an election it was clear that there wasn t much they could do about it You know no one was going to die conveniently and leave a vacant seat that they could fight for so it was a sort of a long hopeless farce for two years

Setencich became the speaker in late August or early September as I

recall and I had arranged to retire in October October 1st As a matter of fact I had put all the papers in and all that kind of stuff and on October 1st I would have been retired John Burton who was the chairman of the Rules Committee the Democratic chairman of the Rules Committee I think by that time we had a Republican chair and he was sort of the vice chair something like that He came and he asked me what my plans were I said Well I m planning to retire and go south on my sailboat He said Well I d like you to stay until January until the 31st of December He and I had not been close associates and good friends He had always regarded me as a spy and an agent of Willie Brown and he felt that he had never had my undivided loyalty and he was absolutely right he had never had my undivided loyalty And he never earned it either I said Well what s the purpose? He said Well the Democratic caucus has now got a problem Everybody has a friend who wants your job

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY Because I got paid about 130 grand a year so yes a bunch of them a lot of members wanted to retire and take my job He said If we don t do anything and you stay then there is no vacancy So then we don t have a Hispanic group getting mad at a black group or a black group or a black group getting mad at a sub part of the caucus another faction of the caucus And we finesse the whole issue by you just staying here until January Maybe something will happen you know

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY Things will look up So I agreed to do that and so for that reason I stayed

on until the 31st of December which was cutting it rather more finely than I had intended to because on the 4th or 5th of January when they reconvened the Republicans had the house for fair and there was wholesale firings and slaughter and seeking out and burning and destroying all vestiges of the Willie Brown years And for two years they kept that up

WOLLENBERG You were convinced that if you would have stayed that they would have not rehired you

CONNELLY I had no illusions whatsoever

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY that I would have survived for real a change in political leadership in the house And in truth I wouldn't have wanted to I was happy to have had this marvelous experience these years with Brown and as the CAO and to do what I could to modernize some of the practices and to correct some of the long standing abuses and failure to contract properly and that sort of thing

I felt that I had definitely made a contribution and I think that most of my colleagues most people who were knowledgeable about it agreed that there had been some real improvement They were partially as a result of my own efforts and initiatives but I didn't take any initiatives that weren't approved or supported by Brown So he can take credit for all of them And I always gave him the credit because I mean he was the elected guy

I never wanted to run for office I turned down the only chance I ever got to run for office because I didn't want to do it It never had much appeal for me I always saw myself rather as a technician a technical person and someone who preferred to operate behind the scene

WOLLENBERG During that year when there was a Republican CAO were each of you being paid \$130 thousand? [Laughter]

CONNELLY Yes absolutely It was one of the dumbest things And the press rightfully just ragged on the assembly for doing it Because one of the first things the Republicans did was say that everybody was making too much money because the Democrats were profligate Then they create a second slot [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY and pay this guy And he didn't really have any duties because they changed often enough that they never really knew very much I mean it was understood that I was sort of going to run the store because I knew how [Laughter] to run the store

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY The bills had to be paid and contracts had to be negotiated and things signed and things done It was stupid it was a silly arrangement It would not have been amusing to continue it

WOLLENBERG If Willie Brown had stayed on would you have stayed on?

CONNELLY Oh sure

WOLLENBERG Or were you ready in '95?

CONNELLY No I would have stayed on I would have stayed on as long as he was there I would have felt obligated to do that Because although I don't think Brown ever thought of me as one of his key lieutenants or anything like that In fact he used to tell people I was his supply sergeant you know which was somewhat demeaning [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY I thought I was a little bit more than a supply sergeant But I felt I knew him pretty well by that time you know after all it had been twenty years I knew that he needed someone in my role that he did not have in his circle especially in the last eighties through the nineties when he pulled out he tended to have an awful lot of people who had less experience and were more political They were political operatives And he needed somebody to tell him that this was not a good idea and he knew that I would tell him if it wasn't a good idea Even up to the end there were a couple of occasions when I was able to say You know Mr Brown that is really not a very good idea for the following reasons And he knew that I had his interests at heart that I would not go to the newspapers and enjoy a one day sensation by revealing everything I knew First of all I didn't know very much Secondly I just wouldn't do that as a matter of course

WOLLENBERG When you went to him and said something wasn't a good idea he would take that?

CONNELLY Oh yes sometimes he would yell and scream He was good at that He would put on a show and then he wouldn't do it So you know you wouldn't know for three or four days that you had any impact

But he knew I never let him down I never played a dirty trick on him I never talked about him behind his back I never talked to the newspaper guys

WOLLENBERG Until now

CONNELLY Until now

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY Well all bets are off now

WOLLENBERG [Laughter] Until taped [Laughter]

CONNELLY [Laughter] All bets are off now

WOLLENBERG But you know one of the kind of strains of your life that we have sort of left behind for awhile here is that nautical strain I'm going all the way back

CONNELLY Oh yes

WOLLENBERG to your Sea Scout days I understand you had kept that up even during your years as Brown's CAO

CONNELLY I always said and I think my first wife and perhaps my second wife would agree that I would have been better off if I had chased fast women and pursued recreational pharmaceuticals rather than build boats

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY I would have had more time at home and it would have saved money Almost simultaneously with taking on the role of CAO my present wife and I decided that we would build a sailboat with which to retire So I had a fifty three foot fiberglass sailboat hull built up in British Columbia and trucked to Sacramento And for the entire time that I was a CAO I was spending nights and weekends and holidays and vacation every time I could get at it completing this boat which was launched in 1994 in which I sailed away in the spring of 1996 for Mexico and the Pacific

It was something that kept me sane Building a boat and working with wood which I loved to do It was a tangible experience and when you build a cabinet or a cupboard or you laid a bulkhead in or you built a deck or you constructed the cockpit framework and fiberglassed it or you ordered the

hardware and all that kind of thing you were doing something that was tangible and you could see it

I came home many and many a night after being down there down at the capital here until 1 00 2 00 3 00 in the morning 4 00 in the morning was not at all that unusual I would go out especially in the summertime and I would go out to the barn behind our home in north Sacramento and climb up on the partially completed sailboat and go way up on the bow and sit there into the rafters of the barn and listen for the trade winds

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY And that was a calming experience and I would give myself knowing that one day all this stuff of problems and difficulties with the press Every year we would release our expenditures Our expenditure report was complete detailed in exhaustive detail and almost indecipherable by design So the press would never take the trouble and the time to really go through it If they had they would have known exactly what we were doing All our expenditures were there but it was presented in such a way that was very difficult But it was always stressful every year

WOLLENBERG You say by design in other words was there some attempt to actually

CONNELLY Oh yes we deliberately obfuscated it Just like Congress does Congress does the same thing They put out a book the size of the L A phone directory which is an annual expenditure report But has anyone ever read it? Of course they can't because it has no index and there is no coherence to the thing You would have to have written it in order to read it [Laughter] and we always knew there wasn't ever anybody out to do that

But it was stressful Those kind of things were stressful We had trouble with the sexual harassment thing and I would have unpleasant days spent in depositions I spent more time with lawyers than most law students do [Laughter] for awhile

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY And even when I was getting ready to leave they videotaped depositions because they knew I wasn't going to be there So I sat in front of a camera for hours and hours and hours of deposition

WOLLENBERG Must have also your FBI investigation must have taken something out of you

CONNELLY And the FBI investigation and we had In running an operation that size and that public you often had things that I mean it's the human factor People do weird things They got themselves arrested and they had the bad sense and bad taste to do it driving assembly vehicles or on assembly premises It was usually my lot to explain this to the press corps and why did we do this and why did we permit this and why hasn't this person been drawn and quartered And you know it never works that simply

The sexual harassment episodes and there were unfortunately a number of them between '90 and '95 when I left at the end of '95 when I left rumors would circulate and there would be unpleasant things that people wanted to attribute The press corps works by ginning up a story and then they have to find someone to quote and attribute it to The trick was always to not talk to them too soon so that you couldn't be a usually reliable source in the capital and that would be me that they were tapped into A lot of times you

can't duck it so I would have to run interference. And I must say that I perhaps obfuscated a few issues in my time in talking to the press. But when I did it, I did it certainly because I didn't want to live with the consequences of a complete and full revelation, but also because I often couldn't. Either I was constrained from something by an issue at law or in fairness. You know, this business when the press corps wanted to see the subpoenas, the search warrants for the famous FBI thing, and they had the names of members who had nothing to do with the subpoena. It just happened that their offices were listed on the thing. I wouldn't give them to them.

That kind of stuff often happened. You know, Willie could shoot from the hip because he was the speaker. But I couldn't kid. I mean, I couldn't kid with the press corps, and I didn't.

WOLLENBERG: So you would go home and sit up on the bow of that ship?

CONNELLY: I sat up on the bow of that sailboat and I listened for the trade winds. It was an important thing to do.

WOLLENBERG: So when you did retire, you quite literally sailed off into the sunset.

CONNELLY: [Laughter] That's exactly what I did. I sailed out through the Golden Gate and I turned south and I stayed gone for a couple or three years. My wife and I had a wonderful experience. After a while I stopped waking up at 3:00 in the morning unless I happened to be up at 3:00 in the morning steering the boat, which was not unusual. And stopped dealing with the stomach churning, indigestion-inducing events that had been so much a part of my life for so many years in the legislature.

WOLLENBERG Did you retrace some of your former voyage?

CONNELLY I did I went to Mexico which I had done in the early sixties For a year and a half I had left the legislature and went to the Pacific on a sailboat I found that just as Thomas Wolfe wrote in the late the first Thomas Wolfe [Laughter] wrote in the early thirties or the late thirties You can't go home again You can't retrace your steps What was a new and wondrous and exciting fresh adventure when I was thirty was not quite the same [Laughter] when I was sixty So we found that economics and other pressures that had changed Mexico and other places we visited it just wasn't as much fun So we came home We now live in Grass Valley in a nice house looking at pine trees

WOLLENBERG That doesn't sound bad I guess when you were on the boat and ever since then you must have had a chance to look back at those thirty odd years a sense of retrospective You know the legacy Not only your own personal legacy but Willie Brown's legacy what it all means

CONNELLY Well I'll tell you I suspect many people at my time in life look back over what they did for a living whether they were successful at it or not and wonder about the efficacy and the value especially the value I felt during the time I was there even back in the early seventies when we were the hotshot Ways and Means Committee staff and we could do everything and we knew everything and we could find it out and we knew it before anybody else and we had insights that no one else had and we were so smart through the years when I was with Forestry and then the many years after 1980 in which I worked for Willie I felt generally that we missed a lot of

opportunities That Brown had a wonderful opportunity to lead He was trained He knew a lot about state government He understood state government finances He knew about our relationship with the federal government and he had the ways and the means of coordinating efforts with the federal government to the state government

I don't know that he ever could have been the governor probably not But he could have been a speaker because it's a very powerful position he could have been the speaker who reached out and again to solve some of these *massive* issues that remain unresolved in California Transportation I mean it's a joke California has a disastrous transportation problem We have never solved the question of water in California We have never really resolved how we are going to finance schools and how we are going to see to it that schools are equally treated and that they strive for excellence The legislature in his time never demonstrated excellence during the years he was the speaker We never even celebrated excellence We were so concerned with the razzle dazzle the footwork the hustle of day to day politics and year to year politics with the objective always that he would be re-elected speaker each two years

We didn't take he didn't want to take the chances He didn't want to reform the management of groundwater in California He didn't want to handle issues in the social welfare area so that people got medical treatment and I mean there was always some of it Incrementally all of these issues were touched on every year But during his time we didn't reach we didn't find big issues and go for them and once again regain national leadership as

a legislative body of being able to find a way. Because it is very hard, it is very difficult to fix something like the water problem.

The water problem is not a farm problem, it's not an urban problem, it is a multitude of problems that happen to fall under the umbrella of water resources in California. And it would have taken someone with Brown's skill as a negotiator, and as a facilitator, and as a person to put together solutions. But he didn't want to do that. He preferred to sustain himself as the perennial successful candidate for speaker. And that means that you don't take some chances, and you don't take some risks, and you don't offend some people. That was really what was wrong with his speakership.

WOLLENBERG: So the speakership was an end unto itself, rather than a means to accomplish something else.

CONNELLY: Sure. There was no program, there was no plan. There never was a plan. And even towards the end, after Prop. 130 passed and we were supposed to be under such straitened circumstances, some truth to tell, that wasn't true. We did very well, even after Proposition 130. And we had a \$30 million cut in our expenditures. We did cut back from nearly 600 staff to about 200 personnel, and that gave us a lot of walking around room, because we were avoiding salaries for 400 people. We used tricks and devices that were quite legal, but they were tricks and devices to circumvent the provisions of Prop. 130. By doing so, we still had resources. We had resources all during the early nineties.

We needed to have done something to create a more sophisticated, better trained, more competent staff in the legislature. Committee staff, maybe the

Legislative Analyst's Office the Legislative Office of Research We should have sent people to school we should have sent people to good universities to train in the specifics And many universities offered to help us with this to design courses in economics and in planning and in engineering and all the rest of it so that we could have had people who had been through a business school at Stanford and under a contract came back Like the military trains doctors I mean it was so simple and such an obvious thing to do But he never would touch that because he was afraid that he would erode his own internal power structure by having people who were not responsive to it and not reliable to be sent out to campaigns or could not be called on to sit at a phone bank someplace every two years during a primary election in the spring and the general election in the fall

We had this gorgeous Capitol with \$90 million restoration It should still today be the premier art collection in the state of California should be in that rotunda it's a gorgeous building But we never did that Well we don't want to bother you know the school kids are in there and the school kids are good politics School kids are a pain in the ass and they don't learn anything at all about anything by walking through the halls of the legislature Second and third grade kids it's a waste of time But anyhow we didn't do the big things that we could have done We don't have the greatest horticultural display in the world which we could have in Capitol Park if anybody had given a damn about it We have a few museums around here but we do not have a Smithsonian West We don't have anything

And once a year we didn't stop to celebrate writers and painters and artists and educators and have some kind of an event in which we recognize that there are people who do strive for excellence and produce things produce wonderful things We didn't do any of that We didn't do any of that But we stayed speaker We stayed speaker and we had a chauffeur driven limousine and we had a chick on the arm and that seemed to have been the purpose And so I felt that personally my involvement in it was really not worth the time not worth it

WOLLENBERG Did you say things like this to Brown at the time?

CONNELLY I don't think so I didn't have that kind of a relationship with him I would suggest these things I would

WOLLENBERG You would suggest them individually

CONNELLY Individually right write them out and send them to him

WOLLENBERG But you wouldn't say What we need is a big mission

CONNELLY No No because I wasn't in his political center I was in Brown's cadre of staff people but I was not a person I was not Richie Ross to whom he would have listened And Richie Ross would have done it if and only if he thought it would generate success in the next election There was nobody there and he didn't want to hear it

There was no occasion when you could sit down and talk about these things When I became the CAO I stopped going to his staff meetings because I wasn't on his personal staff anymore and it was not appropriate that [Laughter] the CAO go to the speaker's staff meetings And the staff meetings were the time in the early eighties before I was appointed to the

CAO that you might have said things like that Why don't we do this why don't we solve this problem Solved the problem of drinking water and solved the problem with sewage in the Tijuana River

WOLLENBERG Yes I remember

CONNELLY Solved these kind of things But there was no brief for that there was no interest in doing any of that kind of stuff And he knew his house didn't care about it either They didn't care All they wanted to do was get in and establish themselves get as much as they could for themselves politically during their abbreviated term limit tenure and then look for a role jump to a congressional seat or jump to a senate seat or get appointed to something I mean it was not a high toned [Laughter] operation You know I was really good at keeping a lid on things and keeping things from getting out of hand and keeping people from doing stupid things members who wanted to try their level best to commit felonies And sometimes we were able to head them off and explain to them that that was not a good idea that it probably would come to light and they probably should not do that Not often but there was enough of that that And get people off of drunk driving raps and all that kind of stuff So there was plenty of that kind of stuff that I did

It is easy to fall into to mistake that for something real and I did I kidded myself And I knew I was going to sail away from it and there was a selfishness in me You know I am making a good salary I am doing what I am supposed to do I am not doing anything illegal And if we're not setting the world on fire we're not saving the world for democracy well that's not my role That's not in the job description of the chief administrative officer

But in retrospect I do think that we missed an awful lot of opportunities. The budget process, for an example. It doesn't take someone any more than one cycle to be involved intimately as a staff person in the budget process to realize that it is stupid. First of all, a state like California ought to have at least a two year budget and it certainly ought to have a five year plan for budgets. Because otherwise, how the hell can you plan any support for any institutions or programs if you are doing it on a year by year basis?

Secondly, the legislature passes three to five thousand bills a year, the governor signs probably 2,500-3,000 of them, many of which have fiscal implications, many of which therefore you would expect to show up in the subsequent year budgets. But they often don't. The legislation gets lots in the maw of the agencies, indifference and interest in pursuing agency interests. Not the governor's interest. The legislature is supposed to watch the public purse. That is what the legislature's whole sole and only really reason for being is to be the gatekeeper, the purse string keeper.

But these guys had no idea what the agencies were doing. They still don't have any idea as to what they are doing. I mean, there have been innumerable blue ribbon panels that go back and figure out ways of accountability. But the truth is that you have to get into a couple of agencies and get inside and find out what the bloody hell they are doing with the money they get and find out whether it has one, any relationship to the volumes of statutory directions that the legislature over the year has given them, and two, whether, if they are not doing that, what are they doing with the money? What is happening to the money? Where does it go? So big agencies, the big super agencies of

California Health and Welfare Education Resources Transportation have lives of their own. Governors don't control them. Governors come and go four years eight years maybe max.

WOLLENBERG But you know getting back at least part to this thing of vision normally that is what you think of as coming from the executive branch. Normally you think it is a governor or a president who is supposed to do what George Bush called The Vision Thing. I mean Willie Brown was the speaker through a series of governors who weren't exactly visionaries.

CONNELLY Well that's true. That's true. And we had a bunch of dunderheads who were more interested in three strikes you're out and the death penalty and excluding people from emergency rooms and schools and I mean stupid stuff. But Willie was there and Willie knew. If it happened today if I were looking at today's legislature I would say Well these guys don't know anything. So how could they have a long term vision they don't know what we're doing. They don't know what the agencies are doing they don't know what the legislature is doing.

But Willie knew that the budget process was badly flawed. It is almost like a smokescreen to keep the public believing that the legislature is doing something while they go through this annual slow waltz of the budget and the endless meetings of the subcommittees and the budget revision and then the conference committee and then the endless effort to get fifty four votes in the assembly and twenty seven votes in the senate. The drama is in the process and it has nothing to do with reality. It could be a lot shorter and we shouldn't have a supermajority requirement for the budget. And that initiative

could have come from inside of the legislature. A reform of the budget process, it's their process, they can do anything they want with it. Instead of having the whole staff go home or run out for campaigns in the fall, the staff could learn something about what the agencies are doing, so they could actually be in a position to advise the legislature. But we didn't want to do that. Staff in many cases had a political role in half of the year. That didn't stop with Proposition 130.

So you know, we couldn't have changed the world, but there was nothing we couldn't have gotten into. Nothing. Once there was a water plan, there was a transportation plan, there was a master plan for higher education. All of that is forty years ago. Where the hell is that today?

WOLLENBERG: Yes. Well, then again, I guess that gets back to a comparison between Willie Brown and Jess Unruh, because it does seem to me that during that Unruh era, in fact, the legislature, and maybe the governor too, did pass big plans and do big things.

CONNELLY: Well, you know, California was a smaller place in 1960. There were only 18 million people here. The legislature was just finding its way into the 20th century in 1966, when it went full time and was reorganized as it is today.

The climate was right. People were still expecting the legislature to do things. I think the public's expectation of the legislature is pretty low these days.

WOLLENBERG: It is not just the legislature, it is all government.

CONNELLY: All government, yes. I mean, everybody is absolutely convinced that the government can't do anything right.

[End of Tape 11 Side B]

[Begin Tape 12 Side A]

WOLLENBERG We were talking about the potential that was unrealized

CONNELLY Yes There was plenty of unrealized potential But in an era when there was as much chicanery in the public as there was in the legislature there were many instances of corporate irregularities of irregularities corporate misbehavior and that sort of thing We didn't do all that badly I mean we didn't break new ground we didn't reach to the heights

California in 1960 was a small place It was 18 million people Our budget was \$3.2 billion the first one I worked on in Alan Post's office in 1961 Now it is \$102 billion and there are 34 million people The increase in the last forty years is more than everybody who lives in Scandinavia for example There is no time in history there is no place in history that you could find a growth of that magnitude in a state a nation state city state state state that happened so seamlessly We absorbed almost sixteen seventeen million people

I went through five or six governors over there as a staff person I never saw a tank parked in Capitol Park I never saw armed men when we were electing a speaker I never saw police barricades or barbed wire around that building Now this is a time when [Laughter] the Soviet Union collapses the whole Republic of Yugoslavia with the death of Tito that occurs in this period and we have the flaming demolition human demolition that took place in Serbia Bosnia Herzegovina and the rest of those places All of Africa has imploded exploded has collapsed on themselves all over the world Jakarta

Indonesia has gone through all kinds of throes of terrible wicked murderous revolution and internal revolt China has metamorphosed into whatever it is going to be in the future with a billion two hundred million people

So we didn't do so bad We didn't do so bad We educated people we built the highways we built the bridges We didn't build enough we didn't think far enough ahead of ourselves But we accommodated a hugely burgeoning exploding population which was disparate in and of itself There were all white folks in California [Laughter] in 1960 There was no Hispanic vote There was no black vote There was no Asian vote certainly There is today

We have gone through a microcosm of the whole American experience on the East Coast in forty years with huge immigration We are the only place in the world California and Mexico the only place in the world Texas Arizona and New Mexico are included of course where the Third World sits up against right juxtapositions right up against the First World

WOLLENBERG Tijuana and San Diego

CONNELLY San Diego And you have this enormous pressure of people who have nothing The year or two I spent recently in Mexico certainly reinforced that view What is the basis of currency all over the world? Even the Euro is falling apart against the American dollar again And the American economy despite all of the craziness of the dot com baloney of the last four or five years is still regarded as the strongest single economy in the world It is the place to go it is the place to put your money [Laughter] That is the vote that counts [Laughter] And the money is coming here

So California has had a remarkably successful forty years. The thirty years I had anything to do with it, it had a lot of successes. It just didn't break the new trail that I wish we had.

WOLLENBERG: Sort of a—is the glass half empty or is the glass half full?

CONNELLY: Yes. I think it is half full. I think it is half full.

WOLLENBERG: You know, you have been giving a retrospective in this big cosmic sense, but are there some stories that you still want to tell, or some personal retrospective that you want to explore?

CONNELLY: Well, you know, it was not without humor.

WOLLENBERG: [Laughter]

CONNELLY: You can't have those kind of experiences without having some funny times. One of the funniest was a time when I was alerted, one morning, that the overnight maintenance staff had found a piece of white paper folded up in the form of a small envelope containing a yellow powder in the chair in the private office of one of the members of the assembly. That startled me. So I went to the chief sergeant, and he told me that he had been given a piece of evidence by a maintenance man, an overnight maintenance man, who for one reason or another did not go to the state police (they were in the building twenty-four hours a day) but had given it to our sergeant. Our sergeant [Laughter] Charlie Bell, bless his heart, had pushed it under the plastic cover on the top of his desk, and he spent most of the day just looking at it. A story like that doesn't stay contained. A story like that oozes through the soundproof walls.

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY About 3 00 or 4 00 in the afternoon or maybe a little later I was in my office in the third floor of the Capitol and the speaker came in He motioned to me to follow him I walked out and we stood in the hallway Because he always thought that the building was bugged I had the building swept parenthetically many many times during the eight or nine years I was CAO never found any evidence of anybody recording anything Why would they bother? [Laughter] But anyhow he took me aside and he said This problem exists A prominent member his office has been cited in this he said Solve it So I went to the sergeant and I said What in the hell have you done with the packet He said Well I flushed it down the toilet [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY I said Charlie¹

So a little bit later very little later I was out in the hallway and by this time we had the entire press corps I mean maybe thirty or forty of them were literally following the story [Laughter] up and down with the cameras on their shoulder and all that kind of stuff They caught me in the hallway so we went into my office They said What can you tell me about this powder in the member s office? I said Well we looked at it and our security staff here They said [Laughter] You mean Charlie Bell?

I said Yes are trained through the Peace Officers training program system through the junior colleges and we have graduate work, and we have determined that this evidence that this substance was not a controlled

substance and we have disposed of it. He said, Well, Charlie told us he flushed it down the toilet. I said, Well, he has disposed of this because it was not germane, not substantive. So the guy stuck a camera in my face, he said, Mr. Connelly, he said, what do you think it was? A yellow powder, it was in a little paper packet. I said, I don't know, Cremora?

WOLLENBERG [Laughter]

CONNELLY And that got a laugh out of everybody and it took the heat out of the story. And the thing dried up and blew away. Fortunately we didn't hear any more about that. But within a short time, a couple of weeks, a young woman, who did not work for us, thank God, but worked for the legislative bill room in the basement of the Capitol, and that is run by the Department of General Services, and those folks are the executive branch employees, thank God. This young woman had been the recipient of a small bequest from her late mother, some \$20,000 or so, which I gather was intended to help her buy a house or something like that. She was a working mother, unmarried, and had a child.

So she decided that entrepreneurship was her better course, so she bought herself a ring binder, and having had some contacts in the underworld, she got a supply of cocaine, and decided that she would become the official distribution point in the Capitol for cocaine. She was so unskilled, and so unsophisticated, that she did it off the top of her desk in the bill room. Not surprisingly [Laughter], she was observed by some of her colleagues, and not surprisingly the police arrived shortly after that and confiscated her capital and along with her ring binder. As soon as that happened, of course, the name

of the game was Who is in the ring binder?

So I went to the state police who were running the thing at the time and I said I wondered if there was anything we needed to talk about They said no they were doing an investigation The long and the short of it was that the evidence apparently disappeared [Laughter] the binder was lost [Laughter]

WOLLENBERG Under state police custody?

CONNELLY It was never clear in whose custody the document had disappeared But in any event it disappeared and we never heard from it again And the young lady disappeared She was reassigned or something happened to her But there was a collective sigh of relief Because I know there was some of that going on Not much but during the seventies especially and the early eighties there was some nonsense going on in the Capitol

I actually was called to the television control room We built a television set in the Capitol a television station in the Capitol and the control room the cameras were all operated remotely from joysticks in the control room They called me in [Laughter] they said Come on down it was down on the third floor right down the hall and I walk up there and I watched a drug transaction [Laughter] in the Assembly Ways and Means Committee with a staff person and an elected member I probably should have called the police but I didn't We headed it off and stopped it and got the staff person safely fired and sequestered and out of there and had a chat with the member so that their experiments in controlled substances stopped at least that case That was the only time I saw it on television But there was some of that stuff going on And it is impossible to stop because you have it in any corporation

you have it anywhere in the world

WOLLENBERG Well Bob we have been talking about the past but what about the future?

Are you just going to sit up there in Grass Valley and look at the pine trees?

CONNELLY No no I couldn't do that I did write a novel since I left the legislature I've reread it a couple of times and it's so bad I'm not surprised that it's been rejected

WOLLENBERG Is it a political novel?

CONNELLY No it isn't It's an adventure story But I have a massive amount of notes from my career in the legislature and I'm contemplating writing a book about that about my experiences But in the meantime I'm teaching high school

WOLLENBERG Yes?

CONNELLY There's a new charter school starting in Grass Valley it's a couple of years old now they're just getting going I'm going to teach U.S. history and political science and maybe an econ. course I did a little of that in a junior high school this spring and it was déjà vu all over again It's unruly arrogant obnoxious little kids who weren't a bit interested in U.S. history and who gave me an awful bad time while I was trying to impart the structure and intent of the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights but who surprised me and who amazingly retained an awful lot of what we talked about So I was much rewarded I'm hoping to work with slightly older children [Laughter] in the tenth and twelfth grade this year youngsters they're not children they're youngsters And hope to find a way to engage them in my enthusiasm for American and European history and for political science and all of its ramifications

WOLLENBERG Well good luck And thank you very much

[End of Interview]